

THE
Scripture-History
OF THE
SABBATH.

By SAMUEL GRASCOME,
A Presbyter of the Church of *England*.

Rom. xvj. 17, 18.

*Now I beseech you, Brethren, mark them which cause
Divisions and Offences, contrary to the Doctrine
which ye have learned, and avoid them:*

*For they that are such, serve not our Lord Jesus Christ,
but their own Belly; and by good Words, and fair
Speeches, deceive the Hearts of the Simple.*

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THE
EPISTLE
TO THE
READER.

Christian Reader,

THE sad Distractions,
strange Variety of Opinions,
and bitter Animosities amongst us,
with other ill Effects thence arising,
as every Man must be sensible of,
so doubtless every good Man doth bewail. But if any
Man, out of his Excess of Charity
and Compassion, shall endeavour
to heal these Breaches, if
he do not use extraordinary Can-

A. 2.

tion.

The Epistle

tion, he shall rather pour on Oil than Water; and instead of quenching the Fire, blow all into a Flame: For no sooner shall you touch the Sore, though with a Design to dress it, but they presently fall a kicking; and it is well if you do not make the Matter worse, instead of mending it. To enquire into the manifold Causes of this, would be too tedious; but I think this is apparently one, That Men are not content to differ in their Opinions as becomes Christians, (which in many Things they might do, without either Prejudice to Salvation, or dividing Communion, or Breach of Charity,) but for the most part they are apt to lay too great Strefs and Weight upon their own private Opinions and Fancies. They will single out some particular Tenet, and that commonly an Error; and with this they gather Parties, and distinguish themselves from

to the Reader.

from all others; by this they are known, it must be the Mark or Name in the Forehead; they who have it, are God's People, and Saints; those who oppose it, are in the ready Road to Ruin; and if they will not come in to them, shall be damn'd to all Intent and Purposes. And if the Opinion be not in it self fitted for this purpose, they will, contrary to its Nature, force it to be so: For, as to the Millenary Opinion, how harmless might it be, if Men only made this, which one would think to be the natural Use of it, to watch over our Lives and Conversations, and prepare for Christ's Coming; to trim our Lamps, have our Oil in them, and be always ready for the Bridegroom: But when Men will undertake to make ready his Kingdom for him, be his Deputies till he come, and think nothing bad enough can be done to those who will not comply

The Epistle

with their pretended Power and Designs, they become one of the most pestilent and dangerous Sects in the World.

*There is no doubt but that there are some Things which will justify a Division; otherwise, there could be no colourable Pretence for any Division at all: But that most of our Sects are founded upon unnecessary and unjustifiable Causes, I suppose most Men will acknowledge as to others, how tenacious soever they may be of their own particular Opinions; and perhaps some of them are better slighted than taken notice of, as being in their Nature not long-liv'd, but apt to die of themselves, if not revived by Opposition: And such, for some time, did I take to be the Errour of those called the Saturday-Sabbath-Men, till by Experience I found them greatly increase, and many sober, well-minded Persons
led*

to the Reader.

led away, or infected therewith. Charity to their Persons, and Hopes to rectifie their Mistake, was the great Motive which prevailed on me to write this little Tract; and I should think my Pains well bestowed, if I could be an Instrument to recover some of the Deceived; for as for the Deceivers, I despair of doing Good of them: An honest Mind is capable of Conviction; but those who have set up a Trade to deceive, have so interested themselves in Gain and Credit, as will rarely suffer them to condescend to so much Self-denial, as to comply with Truth that makes against them.

Some perhaps will say that this Subject hath been wrote on before; and I would willingly know what Subject hath not been wrote on before: Many, indeed, have been very busie in this Matter; and some who have wrote with the greatest

The Epistle

greatest Confidence in Words, have shewed the greatest Weakness of Argument; and several I have scarce had Patience to read, as being, in my Apprehension, much fitter to confound, than to satisfy any Man. Of all that have fell into my Hands, none seem to me written with greater Perspicuity, and Strength of Argument, than that Speech of Doctor Prideaux, then Master of the Chair in Oxon, afterwards Bishop of Worcester; and the Letter and Answer to Mr. Byfield, by our learned Brerewood: But they having not to do with Men who strictly insisted on the Day of the Jewish Sabbath, touched but lightly on that Argument; and as new Errours arise, or old ones are revived, so they must be wrote against afresh, with Arguments adapted to the Times, Persons, Matter, and Manner of Handling, which I
have

to the Reader.

have herein endeavoured; and if I have failed, it may stir up some abler Pen to do it better; and it will be some Satisfaction to me, if I should occasionally do some good that way, if none really in this.

I know many Men in these Days relish nothing but what is learned, and therefore will expect that this small Treatise should be stuffed with a World of Authorities, and will wonder when they shall see not one Citation, except from holy Scripture; and yet perhaps I could have produced as many as some of those who will be most apt to find fault for want of them; but indeed, I have industriously avoided them, as not agreeable to my Design; for my Intention was not to write to the Wise and Learned, but to the Weak and Mis-led; to such as have honest Hearts, but want distinguishing Heads; and discern not clearly the different Dispensations

The Epistle

penfations of God to Mankind, and the different Obligations thence ceasing or arifing : And thefe poor Men unhappily have little regard for Fathers, or Councils, or the Judgment of learned Authors; but are rather prejudiced againſt them, and yet at the ſame time have a great Veneration for the holy Scriptures; and therefore in this Caſe I thought it moſt proper to imitate St. Paul, who became all Things to all Men, that if poſſible he might gain ſome: And accordingly, I have dealt with them in their own Way, and managed their own Weapons; yet ſo as that I have not singled out any particular Perſons, nor (that I know of) uſed any provoking Language; but have examined only the Cauſe it ſelf, and endeavoured to ſet that in a true Light; and therefore, if I have not pleaſed them, I hope they will be ſenſible

to the Reader.

sible that I have no ill Will towards them.

I know not whether we are fallen into a more scribbling or more censorious Age, wherein was never more Writing, and never less Encouragement: Almost every Man is forward to be in Print, and every Man is ready to damn it as soon as it peeps abroad; and I should be a very vain Man, if I should expect fairer Quarter than others. But if I have the good hap to disentangle some of those poor deluded Persons from their Errours, for whose Good I designed this, I value not all the Censures of our superwise Criticks. I thank God, I am conscious to my self of my own Sincerity; and to the best of my Understanding, I have set down plain Truth, without Respect of Persons; and if my Pains be not worth Thanks, my good Will
may

The Epistle, &c.

*may deserve Pardon; who, if I
have missed of my Aim, have
yet endeavoured to do some Ser-
vice; and am*

Yours in Christ Jesus,

S. GRASCOME.

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OF THE
SABBATH.

CHAP. I.

*An Enquiry whether there was
any fix'd Weekly Sabbath
before the Time of Moses.*

AS Man was created for
the Glory of God, so
greater and stronger
Obligations cannot be,
than those laid on him to be du-
ly subservient to that End. His
very Being, and every Moment's
B Con-

The Scripture-History

Continuance in that Being, the Supports and Comforts of his Being, himself and all he enjoys, flow all entirely from the Kindness, Goodness and Bounty of his Maker, without whom he not only could have nothing,* but would even resolve into his first Nothing. But as if all this, which all the World beside cannot bestow, were not enough, he hath promised more, greater and better Things, to those who diligently and faithfully seek and serve him; even the raising again and glorifying their frail Bodies, the perpetuating their Being, the addition of such pure, full and uninterrupted Joys, as know no Mixture of Alloy, Sorrow, or Trouble; together with the Enjoyment of God himself, the most perfect Being; and all this to all Eternity. So that Man never so truly serves himself, and his own Interest, as in serving his God.

If

of the SABBATH.

3

If any *Ingratitude* could be so great, or strong, as to break thorough all these Obligations, yet one would think that even *Folly* it self would not; for did not we see it with our Eyes, did not *Experience* rise up beyond all Contradiction against *Argument*, certainly *Reason* would think it self imposed upon to believe that any Man could be so *prodigious* and *inveterate* an *Enemy* to himself, as from time to time perversly to reject all he could *hope* or *wish* for. But to cure Man of this desparate Malady, and at once to secure him both to his *Duty*, and his *Happiness*, God hath (as I may say) in Mercy denounced the Vengeance of Everlasting Fire, unspeakable and endless Torments, as the just Punishment of those, who by dishonouring their *Maker*, bid defiance to their own *Bliss*. For though no Punishment can be

The Scripture-History

too severe for those who thus affront an Infinite and infinitely gracious God, and court their own Misery and Ruin ; yet that God who delights not in the Death of a Sinner, hath ordained, and in ordaining hath forewarned us of this endless and intolerable State of the Damned ; not that Men might fall into it, but that they might take care to avoid it ; and in avoiding it, be happy. And when Life and Death, Eternal Happiness and Everlasting Misery, and an unavoidable Necessity of coming into one or other of these two States are set before a Man, one would think there should need little Consideration to determine his *Choice*, or any farther Motive to spur him to his *Duty*.

Since therefore Man is under a Necessity to be dutiful to his God, if he would either arrive at Happiness, or escape Eternal Misery,

of the SABBATH.

5

Misery, the next Enquiry in course will be, How we may so serve him, that our Service may be acceptable to him? How we may so glorifie him, as not to dishonour him? For when Men will be wise over-much, and prescribe to God, rather than accept Prescriptions from him; when they will calculate their Duties for their Humours, little Interests, Disgusts, Ambition, or the like, we see by woful Experience that they have converted their very *Religion* into a *Nuisance*, and made what they accounted their *Duty* to become their *Sin*. But to prevent this Mischief also, it hath pleased the All-wise and Gracious God to reveal his Mind and Will in this matter so fully and clearly, that none need want sufficient Directions how to order themselves in every State, Condition and Relation of Life, and manage all the Actions of it

to his Glory. But because it is not my Business at this time to run thorough so large a Field, I shall only instance in one thing, which God hath laid as a common Duty upon all; and that is, his *Publick Worship*. Therein we acknowledge him to be Sovereign Lord of Heaven and Earth, of all Mankind, and particularly of our selves; and that we and all ought to live in Subjection and Obedience to him. In our Prayers, Praises and Thanksgivings we own to the World our entire Dependance upon him, our absolute Submission to him, and that we receive all our good Things from him; and that to do this, is no less the Duty of others, than our selves. In hearing of his holy Word, we do as it were confess in the Face of the World, that of him we ought to learn our *Duty*, and take his Revelations for our *Rule*. In participating

ting of the holy Myſteries, we do profeſs our Faith and Incorporation into the Myſtical Body of Chriſt, from whence we derive thoſe Supplies and Benefits, which are not elſewhere to be expected. And theſe things God hath ſo required of us, that he interprets the Neglect thereof to be a being *aſhamed* of him; yea, even a *denying* of him. Hence our Saviour tells us, that thoſe who are *aſhamed* of him, or *deny* him before Men, he will be *aſhamed* of them, and *deny* them before his Father which is in Heaven. Seeing we receive all from God, and owe all to him, the leaſt, certainly, we can do is, freely and openly to acknowledge it; and yet, as little as this is, it is that whereby we moſt apparently give Glory to him, and ſet forth his Infinite Power and Goodneſs: So that could all our Time be thus ſpent in mag-

Mark 8. 38.
Matth. 10.
33.

The Scripture-History

nifying his great and glorious Name, it would be little in respect of what we owe to him.

But such is the Nature of Man, especially since his Fall, that much of our Time is spent in quest of Supplies for our Necessities, much in discharge of our Duty towards others, or dispatching our Affairs with them : And therefore, that God (to whom we owe all) may not be robbed of his Share, it is necessary that such a certain Portion be set apart for his Service, that we fail not to make a due Acknowledgment of his Sovereignty over us, and our Subjection to him. And if this be not done, and duly observed, such an Aversion to Divine Matters hath seized our corrupt Natures, that we shall be very apt from time to time to incroach more upon God's Share, till we have left him none at all, and so to live

as

of the SABBATH.

9

as without God in the World ; from whence nothing can be expected but a Curse upon our present Blessings, and Eternal Damnation hereafter. But now, what proportion of Time it is which ought to be employed in this part of God's Service ; and whether God for some time left it to the Discretion of Man, to try how liberal he would be to his God, who had given him all ; or whether God did set out such a Portion of Time which he would have appropriated to his publick Worship, not abridging Man from making a Free-Will Offering of what more he could spare ; and what that Time is, and whether always the same proportion of Time, and whether altered or alterable, is a Question which (the more's the pity) some have brought into Controversie ; the Consideration of which I am now to enter upon.

P. 2

Those

The Scripture-History

Those who would make the *Jewish Sabbath* of immutable Obligation, though they run upon an Error which endangers no less than the Overthrow of the whole *Christian Faith*, yet they make a very specious Plea, and seem to lay the Foundation very deep, if the Ground were sound; but they build in a Quagmire, which slips from under them. They begin as low as the Creation, urging that Text of Moses,

Gen. 2. 2, 3. *And on the Seventh Day God ended his Work which he had made, and he rested on the Seventh Day from all the Work which he had made; and God blessed the Seventh Day, and sanctified it, because that in it he had rested from all his Work which God created and made.* Now by the *Seventh Day* in this place; is plainly meant the *Seventh Day* from the *Creation*; which in the Weekly Course was afterwards made the

Jewish

of the SABBATH.

II

Jewish Sabbath, and is the same which we call *Saturday*. Nor do I see how this can be avoided, unless by flying to their Hypothesis who will not allow so much Time, but make short Work of the Creation. But as this is not to *untie*, but *cut* the Knot, so it would be to run into a scandalous Mischief, and unpardonable Crime: For this is not only to turn *Moses* into Fiction, but to make the Reason on which the *Sabbath* was founded to be false, and to give the direct Lye to God himself, who so often urges the due Observation of the *Sabbath* on the *Jews* with this Reason, *It is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God*. Nor can they heal themselves by saying, That whenever God ceased from the Works of the Creation, it may properly be called a *Sabbath*, be the Time more or less: For it is not urged barely to prove or as-
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The Scripture-History

sert a *Sabbath*, or God's Resting from the Creation; but a *Sabbath*, one Day in *Seven*, and particularly *that Day* of the *Seven*. I shall therefore leave those Men to shift for themselves, and seek no Help from such as will be so wise as to know more, or better, than God has revealed; especially in those Matters which we can come to no certain Knowledge of, but by Revelation. Be it therefore freely granted, that by the *Seventh Day* is here meant that which in succeeding Times was the *Jewish Sabbath*, and is our *Saturday*: And then it will also be plain, that God did personally, and by himself, *bless and sanctifie* that Day at that time, because he did then *rest*, and cease from the Works of the Creation. And if it could be farther proved that God did then so bless and sanctifie the *Sabbath*, as to establish it for a Law to
Adam

of the SABBATH.

13

Adam in *Paradise*, that he and all his Posterity might observe it, it would go a great way to prove it obligatory upon all Mankind; and so obligatory, as not to be abrogated or altered, but by the same Power that established it. Before therefore I can proceed to trace the *Sabbath* through the whole Series of the *Scriptures*, it will be necessary to set this Text in a true Light; and it is so much the more necessary, because the misunderstanding it hath been a grievous Stumbling-block to many well-meaning Christians.

The greatest part of this Text is so plain, that he that runs may read and understand it too; the only difficulty lies in these Words, *And God blessed the Seventh Day, and sanctified it.* Now it is observable, that the *Seventh Day* is three times mentioned in this Text, but the *Sabbath* not at all,
nor

nor indeed any where else, till it comes to be given as a Law to the Children of *Israel*: So that by the *Seventh Day* may be meant that *particular Seventh Day* next and immediately succeeding the *Six Days* of the *Creation*: For when all things had received their Being and Means of Subsistence by the Power and Goodness of God, and these Benefits were fresh, surprizing and amazing upon them, it cannot be imagined but that all, especially Angels and Man, should with all Joy and Wonder break forth, and with their utmost Vigour strain themselves, to set forth the Praises of their Maker: So that not only God himself was at that time pleased with, and approved what he had done, but the Creature was most sensible, and thankful for the wonderful Benefit. And thus that *particular Seventh Day* seems in a particular manner

to be consecrated to God's Glory: And this Sense will flow easily, naturally and directly from the Words; but then they make little or nothing to inforce an Observation of the *Sabbath*, which some would hence infer. Now though this is true, yet I shall not insist on it; for I do verily believe that *Moses*, in these Words, had a farther Meaning than all this; and it is agreed on all hands, that he here gives the Reason why God did make choice of the *Seventh* Day rather than any other, on which he did fix the *Sabbath*: But whether not only the Reason be given, but the *Institution* it self set up and declared at this time, is the great Question.

That I may not be troublesome or tedious in running after trifling or little Matters, the principal Opinions in this Case are two; whereof, the one will
needs

needs find a present Institution in these Words; the other says, they are spoken by way of *Prolepsis*, or Anticipation: The one says, that God resting on the *Seventh Day* from the Works of the Creation, did then, at that very time, appoint and constitute that Day to be a *Sabbath* to all Generations: The other says, That *Moses* having given us a Relation of the Works of the Creation on the *Six Days*, and God's *Resting* on the *Seventh*, took occasion thence to tell us the Reason why God fixed on that Day for the *Sabbath*, which he appointed to the *Jews* in *Moses's Time*, and by the Mediation of *Moses*; and which, for that Reason, he might best know. Those who are for an Institution of the *Sabbath* at this time, rely solely on this Text for their Evidence and Proof; yet so, as they are apt to suppose that the Patriarchs,

triarchs, in their Worship, did pay some Deference to this Day. But that Supposition is utterly groundless, there being no Footsteps of any such thing in all the Scripture-History of the Patriarchs, nor any colour to pretend that they had a Regard to any *fixed Sabbath*. The only Reason why they suppose so, is their first Mistake, because they think the *Sabbath* to be instituted at this time, and that therefore they would not have utterly neglected God's *Institution*: But if this prove an Errour, then they only beat the Air, and this Argument vanishes into nothing. Now that the *Sabbath* was not at this time instituted, but only a Reason given, why that Day was made choice of when it was afterwards instituted, will be very clearly evident, if we consider either those Reasons which the Scripture suggests to us, or the
Matter

Matter of fact therein all along related; some of which I shall lay down now, and others will occasionally offer themselves as we shall proceed in unfolding the whole Matter.

These Words, *God blessed the Seventh Day, and sanctified it*, if extended to relate to any thing farther than that particular *Seventh Day* immediately following the Creation, are an Historical Narration telling us what was done, not when it was done. And therefore, if we can find out a certain Time, when the *Sabbath* was instituted, it is good Reason to refer these Words to that Time, as giving us the Reason why, in the Institution of the *Sabbath*, God made choice of that Day, rather than any other. Now nothing is more evident than that God instituted the *Sabbath* many Generations after, in the time of *Moses*, from whom.

whom we have the Account both of the *Creation* and that *Institution*. Now when we have a certain Time of the *Sabbatical Institution*, to leave that, and seek after an uncertain, imaginary Time, is to desert plain *Truth* in the open Field, and hunt after *Error*. So that the most that can be made of these Words, in the strictest Interpretation, can amount to no more than this, That God might then sanctifie the *Seventh Day* by Destination to be made a *Sabbath*, which he actually performed in the time of *Moses*, and by his Mediation, who gives us the Reason of it.

Farther, When the Commandment for the *Sabbath* was by God's Appointment published by *Moses*, these very Words are repeated and inserted in the Body of it, as the Reason of its being instituted on that Day, and therefore ought to be supposed
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The Scripture-History

to refer to that time: And when we find no other Institution of the *Sabbath*, and these Words particularly applied to it, and urged as the Reason of it, what can we think, but that it was intended for that Institution? And if any former Institution be sought for, then the *Mosaical* will not be the *First*, but the *Second*, or rather a Revival of a former Institution; in which case we may reasonably suppose that such former Institution would have been taken notice of, or at least there or some where else hinted at: But the *Mosaical* Institution takes no manner of notice of any former Institution, but is plainly delivered as a new thing; nor is there any where the least Intimation of any former Observation of it, as shall be more fully declared hereafter.

Again, If we enquire after the End and Design of the Institution
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of the *Sabbath*, God himself thus tells the *Jews* what it was; *It is* Exod. 31.
a Sign betwixt me and you through- ^{13.}
out all your Generations. And long after, God quickens them to their Duty, reminding them of the same thing by the Prophet; *Hallow my Sabbaths, and they shall* Ezek. 20.
be a Sign between me and you, that ^{20.}
ye may know that I am the Lord your God. So that the Observation of the *Sabbath* was to be a Mark of their being God's peculiar People, and of their being under his special Protection and Favour, and to put a Difference between them and the rest of the profane World. Now, how could this be, if the *Sabbath* was before appointed to *Adam* in the State of Innocency? For then it would have concerned him and all his Posterity, and reached to all Mankind; and so could not have been a Sign between God and the *Israelites*; i. e. that he
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The Scripture-History

was in a peculiar manner their God, and they his peculiar People: For that which is *common* to all, cannot be a *distinguishing Mark* or Character of one from another; and if all had the *Sabbath* before, it could be no *peculiar Right* or *Mark* of the *Jews* then; from whence we may reasonably conclude, that the *Sabbath* was not instituted till given by *Moses*, to the Children of *Israel*.

I shall now for a while leave this sort of Reasoning, to run along with the History, and enquire after Matter of Fact, and try if we can trace out any such Observation before the Time of *Moses*; and if no *Sabbatizing* appear, we may conclude there was none at that time; for, for a thing not to be, or not to appear to be, is much the same thing as to our passing a Judgment upon it; especially if there
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be Reason to think that there could not, in all likelihood, fail to be sufficient Evidence to make the thing appear, if there were any such thing at all. Now, though the World soon degenerated, and the Generality fell into all lewd and abominable Practices, yet there were some all along who stood firm to the Worship of God, and in defiance of all the Provocations, Temptations and Abuses of a wicked World, did openly profess and adore his holy Name: And if this certain *Sabbath* was not observed either by those brave Heroical Men of the first Ages of the World, stiled the *Sons of God*, or by any other of the Generation of the *faithful and true Worshipers of God*, till the Time of *Moses*, we may conclude that there was no such Institution known; for had it been known, doubtless it would not have been neglected,

neglected, at least not by all of them; and being the least Foot-steps of it are not to be found in their Practice, Sayings, or otherwise, it is reasonable to infer there was no such thing; for had it been instituted, it could not have escaped their Knowledge, for whose sake it was instituted; and had they known it, we cannot think such extraordinary Religious Persons would so unanimously have affronted God in profaning it: And therefore, unless we will condemn all those Generations of the Just, we must allow the *Sabbath* not to be instituted till the Time of *Moses*.

But to make this more plain, let us descend to Particulars, and make our Search from the Beginning; these Words of *Moses*, concerning God's *resting on the Seventh Day, and sanctifying it*, relate to the Time immediately following the Creation; and therefore

therefore, if any Sabbatical Institution then obligatory on Man be intended by them, it must be given to *Adam* in *Paradise*. But what Reason could there be to set apart one Day from the rest, to him, whose every Day's Employment was the Worship, Honour and Service of his God, without any Avocations from it? He was seated in the midst of Delight and Plenty, where all things were abundantly provided to his hand; so that no toilsome Labour or Fore-cast for the Supply of his Necessities could take him off, or hinder him from the Exercise of his Duty towards his Maker: And his Life was then a State of Innocence, wherein Sin was unknown; so that Care, and Pains, and Sin, being then Strangers to him, every Day, for the Use of it, was a *Sabbath* to him, and not one above another. Moreover, He

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had then a particular Familiarity with God, who conversed daily with him; and therefore we must allow him not only to pay a purer and more constant Worship, but after an especial manner to be with God there. And as hence it appears that there was no need or occasion for a particular *Sabbath* in *Paradise*, so the nicest Reading will not afford any Intimation that *Adam* observed any such there.

But the Devil will slip in where he finds the least Opportunity, or Advantage; for repining at, and envying Man's *happy State*, he watched his Time, and gained his Point, to tempt him to his *Fall*, whereby Man corrupted his Faculties, and derived that Corruption to his Posterity; and he that was created after the *Image of God*, having now defaced that Image, is said to beget a Son in his own Likeness, after his own Image.

Gen. 5. 3.

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So that now the Case seemed to be much altered; for he that before wanted nothing, now in the Sweat of his Brows eats his Bread; the Ground being cursed for his sake, brought forth Thorns and Bryars, instead of pleasant Fruits; so that much of his Time and Pains was required to till, plant and order it, that it might afford him a Supply for his Bodily Necessities. And, worse than all this, his Nature being now corrupted, not only gave *Satan* greater Advantage, but he became too much his own *Tempter*, being too inclinable of himself to mispend his Time in Wickedness and Vanity. And when the *Danger of Sin* on the one hand, and *Necessity of Labour* on the other, either required, or was apt to steal away so much of his Time, it seemed very requisite and convenient to sequester some

part of it for the Worship of God, lest in process of time it should be totally neglected, and Sin get the Dominion over him. And that he did so, is certain; but whether that Time was arbitrary or fixed, what proportion of Time was allowed, or whether any certain Proportion of Time, is uncertain. It is reasonable from the History to conclude, that all along more or less was allotted for that purpose, according as the Persons were more religiously inclined, and the Fear of God more prevailed with them: But that God himself did as yet prescribe any such Proportion of Time as *One Day in Seven*, which all without Exception should entirely dedicate to his Worship, whatever other Time they might freely of their own accord allow for that Use, I think doth no where appear; neither was there as yet the same Occasion

Occasion for it as there was afterwards, as I presume will be made evident by the Sequel of this Discourse.

That *Adam* was a very sorrowful and sincere Penitent for his Sin, is generally agreed; nor can it be well imagined, but that the Sense of his Fall from so happy a State, into such a troublesome, dangerous and damnable Condition, should wound his very Soul with a deep Sorrow, even to Confusion; and so much the more, for that God himself was the Reprover of his Crimes, whose Reprehensions could not be withstood, but struck him to the Heart; and though God, in Mercy and Compassion, did administer Comfort to his afflicted Mind, and enter afresh into Covenant with him, making his lost Condition recoverable through the Promise of the *Messias*; yet was it Conditional, which kept him

him ever upon the Good Behaviour; and doubtless, not only the Sense of his own Sin and Fall, but the Injury he had done his Posterity, made him not only more watchful over himself, but more careful to instruct and bring up his Children in the Fear of the Lord; and accordingly, we find them exercised in Acts of Religious Worship. *Cain* Gen. 4. 3, 4. *brings of the Fruit of the Ground an Offering unto the Lord; and Abel, he brings of the Firstlings of his Flock, and of the Fat thereof.* Here are Instances of *Worship*, but no Instance of any *Sabbath*; and that there should be Instances of Worship, for which there is no Precept recorded, and none of any *Sabbath*, nor any Complaint of the Neglect of it, for which some would pretend a Precept, seems very strange if there had been any such Precept: And indeed, though there is

is no Precept recorded, yet it is reasonable to believe that there had some Precept or Direction been given by God concerning Sacrifice, for the Fact is here accepted and approved by God; for though it is true that God had not respect to *Cain*, and his Offering, yet it was not because he disallowed the Fact, but reproves the Falseness and Hypocrisie of the Man, whose Heart was not right in what he did; for had the Fact it self been disallowed, *Abel's* Offering must have been rejected, as well as *Cain's*. And it is very probable that this was not the first Offering; for we read how, immediately after the Fall, God made to *Adam* and his Wife Coats of Gen. 3. 21. *Skins*, and cloathed them: Now it is utterly unlikely, that in so short a time, and before the Curse upon the Earth, any Beasts should die of themselves; and

there was no Occasion to kill any for Food, because Man ate no Flesh till after the Flood: It is therefore most probable that they were the Skins of Beasts killed for Sacrifice; not for Sin-Offerings, Man having no Occasion for that before the Fall; but as Holocausts, or Thank-Offerings, in Acknowledgment that he received all from God, and owed all to him. And therefore it is reasonable to conclude, that the Precept or Direction for Sacrifice was given to Man even in *Paradise*: But the Reason why it is not recorded seems to be this; That *Moses*, when he wrote this History, was by the Command of God to prescribe the Rules of all sorts of Sacrifices, even to the minute Circumstances of them; and so there being no farther Use for any former Precept, it was needless to rehearse it. But if there had been
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been any former Precept concerning the *Sabbath*, it had been highly needful to refresh their Memory with it, when it had been so totally neglected.

After the Murther of *Abel*, it pleased God to give *Adam* another Son, *Seth*, who trod in the Steps of his Brother *Abel*, and from whom the Posterity of the Faithful were continued. And in the Time of his Son *Enos* it is said, That then began Men to Gen. 4. 26. call upon the Name of the Lord; or rather, in strictness of Reading, to have the Name of the Lord called upon them; i. e. as it is in the Margin more agreeable to our English Idiome, to call themselves by the Name of the Lord; hereby distinguishing themselves from the boysterous Posterity of *Cain*, who either neglected the Worship of God, or, like their Father *Cain*, did not perform it with a true and

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The Scripture-History

faithful Heart, but lived vitiously and profanely, as the Distinction is after plainly set down; where shewing how the total Degeneracy of Mankind was at last brought about, it is said, *Gen. 6. 1, 2.* That *the Sons of God saw the Daughters of Men, that they were fair, &c.* And though it appears that there was all along hitherto, a Generation of the faithful and true Worshippers of God, yet is there not the least Intimation of any *Sabbath observed* by them, or *neglected* by the other. It is recorded of *E-*
noch, Gen. 3. 23, that he lived *Three Hundred sixty and five Years* before his Translation; and this Testimony is given of him, that *he walked with God; i. e.* the whole Course of his Life was such a continued Exercise of Piety and Devotion, that he was in an extraordinary manner pleasing to God, insomuch that he suffered him

him not to die, as other Men, but immediately translated him to a more happy State. Indeed, the whole Scene of this Man's Life, for his Conversation and Holiness, may seem to be as one entire *Sabbath*, and I wish others could follow the *Pattern*; but there is not the least Intimation that he or any other observed any fixed *Sabbath*, as remarkable and distinguishable from other Times.

If we proceed now to the Times immediately preceding the Deluge, when God was so highly provoked with the Wickedness of the Old World, that he resolved to destroy the whole Race of Mankind, except *Noah* and his Family, he is pleased to tell us the Causes that moved him to send this severe Judgment; their great and irreclaim- Gen. 6.
able Sins, as Gluttony, Drunkenness, Lasciviousness, continual
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Matth. 24.
38.

Barbarities, Outrages and Violence ; and that Villanies and Villainous Contrivances had wholly possessed their very *Thoughts and Hearts* : But for Violation of the *Sabbath*, there is not the least Reproof, or Hint. Now, seeing God so severely reprehends the *Jews* for the profaning of his *Sabbaths*, and at every turn takes not so much notice of any Sin as this, certainly in enumerating the Sins of the old World, he would not have been altogether silent as to this, if there had been any *Sabbath* under Precept ; and if there had, there can be no Doubt but such profligate Wretches as they are described to be, would have given him sufficient Occasion to mention it with the highest Indignation. But, in truth, that Sin, against which the *Sabbath* was afterwards devised and instituted, as
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a Bar and Fence, was not then crept into the World ; for by reason of the long Lives of the Patriarchs, (*Adam*, the first Man, living even into the Days of *Lamech*, the Father of *Noah*,) it was not possible that the Tradition of the Creation should be corrupted, and the Notion of God the Creator of all Things defaced : And this was farther strengthen'd by those particular Manifestations which God frequently made of himself, to several Persons, in those first Ages ; so that as yet there could be no Room for the Admission of *Idolatry*, which was the *Sin* which afterwards occasioned the *Sabbath* to be instituted. And hence I think it appears, that from *Adam* to the Time of the *Flood*, which is upwards of One Thousand and Six Hundred Years, though the Worship of God was all along carefully upheld in
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some particular Families, yet no such thing as the *Institution* of a *Sabbath*, or the *Observation* of it, was known to any.

What hath been already said, may, I suppose, satisfy any impartial reasonable Man, that the Text in *Genesis* doth not contain any present Institution, but only shews the Reason why God particularly fixed on that Day, when he afterwards instituted the *Sabbath*: So that now I might leap over the rest of the Time, and go presently to the Institution it self. But because the Consideration of the intermediate Time may contribute much to the Discovery of the true Reason which occasioned the *Sabbath* afterwards to be instituted, I shall begin again at *Noah*, and trace the Matter by fair and gentle Steps, till we come to overtake *Moses* in the Wilderness. When *Noah* and his Family were
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enter'd into the Ark, the Apprehensions of such a dreadful Universal Judgment as swept away not only all *Mankind*, but the very *Beasts* of the Earth, and *Fowls* of the Air, must needs affect them with the deepest Sense of their own Danger, and stir them up to the most serious and passionate Devotion; their Vessel floating under them, without any Ground to touch on; the Heavens pouring down impetuous Showers, continually beating over their Heads; the horrid Outcries and Skreams of Men, Women and Children, round about them, sinking; and the fearful Roarings and strange Noises of Beasts and Fowl, in vain striving to avoid the common Destruction; these, I say, and other dismal Circumstances of that fatal Deluge, left no Room for Coldness and Indifference, but did effectually rouse them

§ 1. 8.

them to continual Praises of God for their Escape, and as continual Prayers that he would still preserve them. Nor was it a short Time that they were in this Condition : Forty Days, without Intermiſſion, continued the Fury of that frightful Storm ; an Hundred and Fifty Days the Waters prevailed, or increaſed ; on the Seventeenth Day of the Second Month *Noah* enter'd into the Ark, and the Ark reſted not on any Ground till the Seventeenth Day of the Seventh Month ; and on the Seven and Twentieth Day of the Second Month again, he and his Family went out of the Ark, and then ſo jealous and afraid, that they durſt not ſtir out till God commanded them : So that they were a full Year confin'd to this Wooden Tenement, partly for fear of the Waters, partly be-
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for Habitation. These things so quicken'd their Thankfulness and Devotion, that the first thing we read that *Noah* did after his coming out of the Ark, was, to build an Altar unto the Lord, and to take of every Clean Beast and Fowl, and offer Burnt-Offerings thereon; and there is no doubt but the Remembrance of those things struck an Awe, more or less, upon all those Persons all the Days of their Lives, though we find it did not work on all alike. However, neither in the Ark, nor out of the Ark, do we read of any *Sabbath* observed or mentioned by *Noah* or his Sons; which certainly they would not have neglected, had they ever heard of any such thing under Precept; and it would have been as reasonable to have expected that to be mentioned as Sacrificing, which yet is not done, either here, or
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at any time before, from the Creation.

It is not to be doubted, but that the Deluge left a strong Impression on those who escaped it; and that they related it in all its terrible Circumstances, to their Children and Off-spring: And as it had the good Effect upon some, to keep them close and right to the Worship of God, and to seek their Protection from him; so it strook a strange Terrour in the worst, as we may perceive by their Contrivance in the Plain of *Shinar*, where they attempted, for their future Security, to build a Tower that should reach up to Heaven; such strange Dotages do Men run into, when not trusting to God, and his Promises, they will rely upon their own Inventions: Yet hitherto, though we read of great Wickedness, yet we hear nothing of any Idolatry in the World;

World; but after the Confusion of Languages, when they went out by their Families and Colonies, and spread themselves over the Face of the Earth, and were gotten out of the more immediate Guardianship and Care of the Patriarchs, *Noah* and his Sons, as they spread and multiplied, so did also their Devices; and those who before provoked God, now began to forsake and renounce him, and to make Gods according to their own Humour, and vain Imaginations. The first Practice of *Idolatry* which we find upon Record, was among the *Chaldeans*; and even the Father and Grandfather of *Abraham*, though not without a good Measure of Knowledge of, and Devotion towards the true God, were tainted with it; so prevalent a thing are the Customs of a Country, and constant Conversation amongst Sinners.

ners. This we learn from *Josua*, whilst he warns the *Israelites* from relapsing into that dangerous Sin: *Your Fathers* (saith he) *dwelt on the other side of the Flood, (i. e. the River Euphrates,) in old Time, even Terah, the Father of Abraham, and the Father of Nachor; and they served other Gods.* This was in *Ur* of the *Chaldees*. The *Jews*, who abound with Whimfies and Fabulous Inventions, will needs have *Ur* to signifie *Fire*, the God of the *Chaldeans*; whom *Abraham* refusing to worship after the manner of the Country, was forced (as they say) to depart thence. But this is a groundless Fiction; for *Ur* must signifie a Place, (though perhaps taking its Name from the more celebrated Worship of their God there,) for *Haran* the Brother of *Abraham* died there, and it is called *the Land of his Nativity*.

Nativity. However, the true Reason of their leaving that Country, was, to avoid the Practice of *Idolatry*, and the Temptations to it: And though *Terah* is said to *take Abram his Son*, Gen. 11. and *Lot the Son of Haran, his Son's Son*, &c. and to *go forth with them from Ur of the Chaldees, to go into the Land of Canaan*; yet it seems that this was not so much from their own Inclination, as God's Direction, and over-ruling Hand: For *Nehemiah* tells us, that God did *choose Abraham, and brought him out of Ur of the Chaldees*; yet whether allured by the Riches and Pleasures of the Country, or stayed by the Infirmities of his old Father *Terah*, or for what other unknown Reason, it is evident that he took up short of his Journey's end, and dwelt in *Haran, or Charran*, till his Father *Terah* died; and even when
Terah

Terah was dead he stirred not forward, but stayed hankering after his native Soil, and the Society of his Friends and familiar Acquaintance, till God again gives him a peremptory Command : *Get thee out of this Country, and from thy Kindred, and from thy Father's House, unto a Land that I will shew thee ;* which was the Land of *Canaan*. Now though there may be many Reasons for the same thing, yet the principal Reason why God commands him out of *Chaldea*, into this Country, seems to be this ; That designing him for the Father of the Faithful, and from him to raise a peculiar People to himself, among whom his Name and true Worship should be preserved, as a Testimony against an Apostatizing World, he removed him out of an Idolatrous Country, to a place where the Worship of the true God was yet preserved ;

Gen. 12. 1.

Vers. 5.

preserved ; that not only he might be enur'd to the true Worship, but his Progeny brought up in it with less Danger of Infection ; for as yet *Idolatry* had got none, or no considerable Footing in *Canaan* ; for there we find *Melchisedeck*, the Priest Gen. 14. 18, 19. of the most High God, blessing *Abram* : There we find *Abimelech* King of *Gerar* pleading with God for his Integrity, and calling his People *a righteous Nation*, and making a Covenant Gen. 20. 21. with *Abram* in the Name of God. And though the Cities of *Sodom* and *Gomorrha* are charged with crying and *unnatural Sins*, yet are they not so much as insinuated to be guilty of *Idolatry* in any measure : And when the King of *Sodom* apply'd himself to *Abram*, after his Victory over the four Kings, *Abram* treats him not as an *Idolater*, but speaks to him in the Name of the Lord, Gen. 14. 22.
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The Scripture-History

the most High God, Possessor of Heaven and Earth. And if *Melchisedeck* was *Sem* the Son of *Noah*, (as some think, and it is certain he lived into *Abram's* Time,) possibly the Freedom of this Country from *Idolatry* hitherto might, in a great measure, be owing to his Influence and Authority; though afterwards, when *Idolatry* did get in amongst them, it spread like a Plague, or general Infection, and they became as absurd, barbarous and cruel *Idolaters* as any Nations under Heaven. This Land God promised to *Abraham* and his Seed, that his Name and Worship should be there kept up, that they should be *his People*, and he *their God*: And the more to ensure him and them to him, he gave him the *Covenant of Circumcision*, to distinguish them from the *Idolatrous Nations*; and that it might be a *Mark* on them,
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and *Remembrance* to them, that they were under a *Covenant* with God to serve him alone; and for this Reason the uncircumcised Person was to be punished with Death, as if he renounced God and his *Covenant*: So that *Circumcision* was designed as a *Preservative* against *Idolatry*. But though there is nothing more opposite to that kind of *Idolatry* then in use, than the Observation of the *Sabbath*, (as shall appear hereafter;) yet is it not ever said that *Abraham* kept it, or that God commanded him to keep it, or ever blamed him for the Neglect of it; nor is it so much as once mention'd in all his Story. Hitherto therefore a *Sabbath* is not to be found.

About or near this Time, (whether somewhat higher or lower,) in all probability, lived *Job*; for the Proof of which, passing by many Reasons used

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by others, I shall only insist on these two: *First*, the Age he lived to, which as it falls short of the Patriarchs, who lived before, so it exceeds those which followed after; and therefore, considering by what Degrees the Longevity of the Patriarchs declined, it seems to be most fitly placed here, or hereabout. Scarce any of the Patriarchs before this time began to propagate their Issue till they were Thirty Years old, or more; if any began sooner, yet the Time is so small and inconsiderable, as not to be worth Notice: We may therefore allow him Thirty Years for that; and if then we consider that before *Satan* conspired against him he had *Seven Sons and Three Daughters*, who (as the Circumstances of the Context afford us Reason to believe) were all grown Men and Women, we cannot well allow

Job 1.

of the SABBATH.

51

low him less than Thirty Years upon that Account, probably it might be much more; so that he must be at least Sixty Years old before he fell under his Trial and Afflictions: The precise time of his Trial perhaps is not easily determined; but when God did rescue him out of the Hands of *Satan*, and vindicate him against the bitter Tongues of his *Censorious Friends*, and restored him to greater Plenty and Prosperity than he lived in before, it is expressly said, that *after this* Job 42. 16. *Job lived an Hundred and Forty Years*: Now add the *Sixty* to this *Hundred and Forty*, and we cannot allow him to have lived less than *Two Hundred Years*; but the Tradition of the *Jews* is, that he lived *Two Hundred and Forty*, which has nothing of Improbability in it: Now, below this Time you will scarce find any who attained to either

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of these Ages. The *other* Reason inclining me to think thus, is this, That it is apparent that the Worship of the true God was yet preserved in the place where *Job* lived, not only in his *Family*, but among his *Friends* and *Relations*, and *divers others*; and yet it is as plain that *Idolatry* began then to steal in, and be practised amongst them; for it is against this which *Job* thus justifies himself; *If I beheld the Sun when it shined, or the Moon walking in Brightness, and my Heart hath been secretly enticed, or my Mouth hath kissed my Hand, this also were an Iniquity to be punished by the Judge; for I should have denied the God that is above.* Which Words plainly relate to the *Original Idolatry*, in worshipping the *Sun* and *Moon*. Now in this very Chapter, wherein *Job* pleads his Cause, and asserts his Integrity and Innocence,

Job 31. 26,
27, 28.

nocence, even to very minute Particulars, he neither alledges his strict Observation of any *particular Sabbath*, nor apologizes for the Neglect of any; nor do his Friends, those miserable Comforters, who raked up every thing, true and false, that they could imagine or devise against him, accuse him of any thing of this kind; nor is there any Mention of the *Sabbath* throughout the whole Book, which treating in a manner wholly of *Worship* and *Devotion* towards God, the *Sabbath* had never escaped all their Discourses, if it had been known to them. If any will suppose that he might be ignorant of the *Sabbath*, as not being in the Line of *Abraham*, whether higher or lower; I answer, *First*, That the Supposition is founded on no Certainty, and the contrary more like to be true, most of our

Criticks making him to descend from *Abraham*, at no great distance; though I rather incline to those who fetch it higher, making him not a Descendant from *Abraham*, but of his Kindred. But *Secondly*, Be it true or false, it is nothing to the purpose; for if the Precept of the *Sabbath* was given in *Paradise*, it would have been obligatory, not only to the Stock of *Abraham*, but all Mankind; and the Tradition of it would have been preserved, where-ever the true Worship of God had been continued; which apparently was in the Families of *Job* and his Friends: Yea, this kind of Traditions stuck long amongst the very *Heathens* and *Idolaters*, and were preserved by certain *Sorts* or *Seſts* of Men amongst them, for many Ages: For if we seriously examine those Remains we have of *Antient Philosophy*,
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before such time as the wanton, luxuriant Wits of the *Greeks* diverted it into *Imaginary Hypotheses*, and *Formalized Systems*; we shall find them little else than *Traditional Fragments* of the *History* of the *Creation*. But amongst profane Authors, I remember not any thing looking this way, unless with particular respect to the *Sabbath* of the *Jews*, which they seldom mention without Scorn and Derision, a thing never offered to their *own Traditions*, which they always treat with *Reverence*, though never so obscured with fabulous Superstructures, and extravagant Fancies.

Let us now return again to *Abraham* and his Posterity, where we are most likely to find a *Sabbath*, if there be any to be found at that time. The whole Life of his Son *Isaac* was a continued Course of Piety; but

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amongst all his Devotions, and Religious Actions, there is not the least inkling of any *Sabbatical Observation*. The Life of *Jacob* was somewhat more troublesome; and though *Abraham*, to fly from *Idolatry*, at God's Command left *Haran*, to come into *Canaan*; yet *Jacob* being forced to leave *Canaan*, and fly to *Haran*, to avoid his Brother *Esau's* Wrath, was in danger to have brought *Idolatry* thence with him, into *Canaan*, at his Return; for after his long Servitude, being forced at last to convey himself away secretly from his Father-in-Law *Laban*, with his Wives and his Cattel, he was very hotly persued with no good Intention, if God had not prevented it; and when *Laban* overtook him, being able to charge him with no other Injury done to him, he very angrily asks him, why he had *stolen his*

his Gods? Now his Gods, such as they were, were actually stolen; and though some think that *Rachel* stole them, to prevent her Father's consulting which Way they were fled; and others suppose she did it, that they might be a Refuge to her against her Father's Wrath, if he persued them; yet I am rather inclined to think her Design was, that by that Means she might be able, privately, and unknown to her Husband, to practise that kind of Worship which she had been brought up in, and which by long Use and Custom she had a Kindness for: And if it had not been expressly said, that *Jacob* knew not that *Rachel* had stolen them, yet considering how dearly he loved her, any one would believe him to have been utterly ignorant, who thinks of his Answer to *Laban*; *With whomsoever thou* Gen. 31.

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findeſt thy Gods, let him not live. However, *Laban* was cheated of his Gods; and they, in requital, began to infect *Jacob's* Family, and taint it with Idolatrous Practices: So little Good is to be expected from ſuch Prizes, and ſo artificial is *Satan* in ſtealing in his Worſhip among Men; for afterwards we hear of them again, and that they came even to *Jacob's* Knowledge; for after the Slaughter of the *Shechemites*, when he feared the Country round about would fall upon him, he found himſelf under a Neceſſity to fly to God's ſpecial Protection, and to uſe all Means to procure his Favour: And in order hereunto, the firſt thing he does, is, to give a ſtrict Charge to his Family, to *put away the ſtrange Gods that were among them*; and leſt it ſhould be neglected, he takes care to do it himſelf, and then was in all haſte

Gen. 35.

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haste for going to *Bethel*, to build an Altar unto God; and now, if ever, had been a Time to exhort them to a strict Observation of the *Sabbath*, as being a Practice most contrary to, and inconsistent with *Idolatry*: But not a Word of that either here, or in the whole Story of his Life; so that we may reasonably suppose it to be a Thing utterly unknown to him.

When *Jacob* and his Family went to live in *Egypt*, the Observation of a *Sabbath* may seem to have been a good Guard against the *Egyptian Idolatry*, and an excellent Plea in *Joseph's* Mouth to have obtain'd a separate Living for them in the Land of *Goshen*: But there is not the least Mention of any such Plea or Practice during all *Jacob's* Life-time, and the Freedom of his Posterity there; and during their Captivity and Slavery,

very, it is scarce to be expected ; for he that doubled their Tale of Bricks, and denied their Allowance of Straw, and yet said they were idle, would certainly never so far forego his Profit, and cease from his Haughtiness and Malice, as to give them entirely One Day in every Seven, wherein to do just nothing at all ; though if they had apprehended themselves to have lain under any such Obligation, doubtless as well the Desire of their own Refreshment and Ease, as of God's Glory, would have moved them sadly to bewail their woful Condition, that they were not suffered to act according to it : But there is no manner of Complaint upon that Account. But there had been no Reason to blame them for Neglect of the *Sabbath*, which they knew nothing of, if they had not in a manner wholly fallen off

off from the Worship of the *true God*, and in Compliance with their *hard Masters*, joined with them in serving their *Idols*; which *Joshua* directly charges ^{Josh. 24. 14.} them with. They seem to have had some Remembrance of the God of *Abraham*, *Isaac* and *Jacob*, but little to mind his *Worship*: And when afterwards God, with a stretched-out Arm, brought them out of *Egypt*, notwithstanding all his Signs and Wonders, they still retained a strong Propensity towards *Idolatry*; in so much that when *Aaron*, in the Absence of *Moses*, made them a *Calf*, in imitation of the *Egyptian Apis*, they almost ran mad for Joy; and never appeared so hearty in any Act of Devotion towards God, as in this Fit of *Idolatry* towards their new-made *Idol*; so hardly were they weaned from it. But in all their Journeyings, we read not
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of any Stop they made for the Observation of any *Sabbath*; nor that God required any of them, though he went continually before them, until they came to the Wilderness of *Sin*; from which time to the Creation, is above Two Thousand Five Hundred Years; but according to the Computation of some, much above Three Thousand; the lowest of which Accounts contains above one half of the Time, from the Creation, to the Coming of the *Messias*: In all which time, the Observation of the *Sabbath* seems to be a Thing utterly unknown, and unheard of. I suppose no Man doubts, but that the pious Patriarchs did allot a good Portion even of every Day for the Worship and Service of God; and that, as there was Occasion, they had extraordinary Times of Devotion and Sacrifices: But that they lay

lay under any Obligation to observe the same with the *Mosaical Sabbath*, doth so little appear from their Practice, or any other Evidence, that they seem utterly ignorant of any such thing; which could scarce possibly be, if any such thing had been then enjoined.

Some there are, who, notwithstanding all that has been said, do peremptorily assert a *Sabbath* upon one Day in *Seven*; and particularly upon that *Seventh* Day from the *Creation*, in its constant Return, to have been *Natural* and *Moral*, and as such observ'd before the Time of *Moses*, though not cloathed with those Circumstances, nor enjoin'd under those Penalties as the *Mosaical Sabbath* was. But in two Things these Persons seem to forget themselves, whereby they plainly overthrow their own Assertion: *First*, That they themselves refer

fer it to *Institution*, and particularly to that Act of God mentioned in the fore-cited place of *Genesis*: But if it be by *Institution*, then it is *positive*, and consequently not *natural*. *Secondly*, They not only allow it to be *changeable* and *alterable*, but expressly affirm it to be *changed* and *altered*; and for this Assertion bring Reasons no ways contemptible. But what is *Natural* and *Moral*, is of *Eternal Obligation*, and admits not of *Change* or *Alteration*; and thus all is unravell'd again, and their own Reasonings overthrow their primary Assertion. I must confess, that could they prove it *Natural* and *Moral*, I would give up the Cause without more ado: But when their own Arguments about the same thing do evidently prove that it is not so, and their Assertion that it is so is not supported with one good Argument,

ment, I must crave their Pardon if I cannot comply with them.

But though what is now said may be a sufficient Answer to these Men, yet it is not so to those unhappy Persons who take a larger Stretch, affirming the *Sabbath-Day* to be *Natural*, *Moral* and *Unchangeable*; and upon that Account observe the *Seventh Day* from the *Creation*, in opposition to the *Lord's Day*, or *Christian Sabbath*: And yet even these Men run upon the first Error of the former; for they lay that Text in *Genesis* (that *God blessed the Seventh Day, and sanctified it*) for their *Foundation*, and so must refer it to *Institution* if they should be pressed; and even in that are not without some Mistake. Now what is *Natural* and *Moral*, is agreeable to the Dictates of *Natural Reason*, and may be known, or at least in a good measure discovered

covered by it. Supposing then that Text in *Genesis* to have been unrecorded, I desire them to tell me, how by their own *Natural Reason* they would have found out any more *Morality* in the *Seventh Day*, than in any of the other *Six*? If here they should have recourse to *Pythagorean* or *Mystical Numbers*, I must crave Leave to tell them, That in a Matter wherein they lay an Obligation on all Mankind, they ought to offer such Reasons as may satisfy all Mankind, and may be apprehended by the meanest Capacities which have the Use of Reason. But if here they be at a loss, they must then fly to Revelation and Institution, which agrees not with their first Assertion; and if they be mistaken in applying that too, (as I think hath been made appear they are,) they will be wofully out. That it is a Moral Duty
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to worship God, and to pay him all Honour and Service, our own Natural Reason will at any time teach us; and our Consciences accuse us, if we neglect it at fit Opportunities: And when any part of Time is set apart for God's Worship, thereby a Relative Holiness is affixed to it, which challengeth our Regard and Observance of it: But that any part of Time, the Fifth, Sixth or Seventh Day, this Minute, or the last, or that which is to come, hath more Holiness or Morality in it, as to its own Nature, than any other, I could never yet understand; or indeed, that there is any Morality or Holiness at all, properly speaking, in any part of Time whatsoever, in its own Nature. Those therefore who will needs set up a *Natural Sabbath*, have started an Invention of their own, without any good Ground or Reason for it. Yet

Yet some there are who will suppose that the Patriarchs before *Moses* did observe the *Sabbath*, or at least had some particular regard to the *Seventh Day*: For (say they) the Tradition of the Creation was, doubtless, preserved among them; and they knew that it was finished in Six Days, and that God rested on the Seventh; and therefore certainly they would take particular notice of it, and express particular Thankfulness for it. Now there is no Question to be made, but that they were thankful for it; and so they might be at any time: But that their *Thankfulness* or *Worship* was particularly limited to the *Seventh Day*, is not easily to be believed, when there is not so much as one Instance of it: Or if we should allow them so groundless a Supposition, yet it may be said that they might some-

Sometimes do it upon the Score of Convenience and Choice, and not of Obligation; and if they knew that God rested on the *Seventh Day*, so they knew also that he did so on the *Eighth*, *Ninth* and *Tenth Day*, and ever since, from the Works of the Creation; and therefore if the Rest be the Reason of it, they must have kept a *Sabbath* not particularly on the *Seventh*, but on every Day since those *Six Days*; though God did not then, or now, so rest, but that he continued the Influx of his Power and Goodness, in the Preservation of his Creatures. And, after all, Why may they not as well be thankful for his *Works* of the *Creation*, as for his *Resting* from them; and so at any time, upon Occasion, make particular Choise of any Day of the *Six*, to render particular Thanks and Praise for the particular

ticular Blessings of that Day's Creation? But this they would fain be at, though there is no manner of Evidence for it; That the Patriarchs knew the *Sabbath* to be instituted at the Time of God's Rest: But this I say they did not know; for they could not know the *Sabbath* was instituted before it was instituted, and it was not instituted till after their Time, as plainly appears from the History of its Institution: And as for the Words of *Moses*, in *Genesis*, they do not at all express any former Institution, but evidently relate to the Reason of that instituted in his Time; and the most that can be fairly made of them, is this, That *Moses* received and promulgated the Law before he wrote the *Pentateuch*, or Five Books commonly so called, and therefore the *Sabbath* was instituted, and very well known,

known at that Time when he wrote of the Creation: Now he beginning at the Creation, (as was most reasonable to do,) having there a fit Opportunity, set down the Reason why God particularly made choice of that Day, whereon to fix the *Sabbath*, which was instituted and known at that time when he wrote, though not at the Time whereof he wrote. And this will more plainly appear now that we come to consider the Institution of the *Sabbath*, and the Reason of it.

C H A P. II.

Of the Institution and Observation of the Jewish Sabbath, and other Matters relating thereto.

SEveral Injunctions were by God laid upon the Jews, which, in general, were designed to be as *distinguishing Marks* or *Characters* upon them, that they were God's *peculiar People*, and to bind them fast to his *Worship* and *Service*, and to secure them from the *Idolatrous Worship* then prevailing in the World. After God had commanded *Abram* to leave his own Country to go into *Canaan*, he strictly enjoins him the Use of *Circumcision*, as to all his Males; *And this* (saith the Lord) *shall be a Token of the Covenant betwixt*

Gen. 17.
11.

me and you: That is, It should *distinguish* them from other People, and be a *Mark* of their Obligation and Dedication to the Worship of the true God. But though God tells him, that in *Isaac* his Seed should be called, Gen. 21. *i. e.* the peculiar People, and ^{12.} *Messias* should flow from his Loins, yet the *Circumcision* went along with his Son *Ishmael* and his Posterity, as also with his Sons by *Keturah*; and how long, or short a Time it had any Influence upon them, to contain them within any tolerable Bounds of Duty, we have no Certainty. And then as to the Posterity of *Isaac*, we find his Son *Jacob* to be the *chosen* Person, yet was *Esau* circumcised as well as he: And even upon the Posterity of *Jacob*, *Circumcision* was not so effectual, but that in their *Egyptian* Bondage they served other
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Gods. When therefore God brought them out of *Egypt*, with Design to bring them into the promised Land; and had led them in the Wilderness, to wean them from their *Idolatrous Practices*; and wrought mighty Wonders, to convince them whom they ought to worship; as a thing more peculiar to them than *Circumcision*, and a stronger Preservative against *Idolatry* than that could be, he institutes the *Sabbath*, that so his Honour and Worship might remain among Men, and they might be secured to continue his People.

The first time we find the Observation of the *Sabbath Day* enjoined, is in the Wilderness of *Sin*, before they came to Mount *Sinai*, where the *Ten Commandments* were delivered; as if it were purposely to distinguish the Day, which is *Ceremonial*, and of Divine positive Institution, from

from the Worship it self, which is *Moral*; that so when we find it afterwards among the *Ten Commandments*, which contain Moral Duties, we might know it to be added, the better to ascertain the Practice of that Worship, which is Moral, and required by the same Commandment; not that it was the less to be regarded for being a *Divine positive Institution*, but rather more carefully and cautiously to be observed by them, to whom the Law was given; as being a higher Testification of their Submission and Obedience, than if the Duty had been *natural*.

The Words expressing the Institution, are by way of Notice to the People; *To morrow is the* Exod. 16.
Rest of the holy Sabbath unto the ^{23.}
Lord: And upon the Day it
 self; *To day is a Sabbath unto* Verf. 25.
the Lord. From which Words

some will needs infer, that the *Sabbath* was known and observed by the *Jews* before, because (say they) it is here spoken of as a *known Thing*. But this is a Force upon the Words, and a gross Mistake, for it is evidently spoken of as a *new Thing*; else what means that frequent Inculcation to make the People take notice of it, if it had been familiar to them before? And what means the coming of the Rulers of the Congregation to *Moses*, to consult him as in an *unusual and unknown Matter*, when the People, by Direction, had gathered double the quantity of Manna on the Sixth Day? Much the like kind of Expression is used in the Institution of the Passover; *And ye shall eat it in haste, it is the Lord's Passover*. From which Words, perhaps some Men would think that the *Jews* had been very well acquainted

Exod. 16.
22.

Exod. 12.
11.

quainted with the *Passover* before that time; whereas indeed, the *Passover* was neither known, nor thought of by them till that time, when God made known to them what he would do, and what he would have them to do in that particular Case: Nor was the thing it self acted till the Night following. So that they are Words plainly giving notice of a *new Institution*. Again it is observable, that upon this very *first Sabbath* some of the People went out to gather Manna: Now if they had not known, and been told, that there should be none to be found on that Day; yet they must have known that they ought not to have gone out to seek it, if they had been acquainted with the *Law* of the *Sabbath* before. But that which seems to me to put the thing out of question, is, the Case of

Exod. 16.
27.

Numb. 15. the Man who gathered *Sticks on the Sabbath Day*; for when he was accused, they knew not what to do with him; but were fain to keep him in Hold, till they consulted God in the Matter. By which it appears plainly to be a *new Thing*, not yet adjusted; for had it been a Law from the Creation, it is scarce possible that all Men should have been ignorant whether any Punishment or not, and what, did belong to the Violation of a Law of such standing.

That there was a *Sabbath* commanded and observed in the Wilderness of *Sin*, is evident enough; but it seems to be rather by way of Probation and Trial, and to prepare and fit them for what was to follow, than to lay a standing and continued Obligation: And the Observation of every *Seventh Day* as a *Sabbath*, seems then to pass into

of the SABBATH.

79

into a Law, binding the *Jews* and their Posterity, when it was promulgated from Mount *Sinai*: For those Men who went out to gather Manna on the *Sabbath Day* in the Wilderness of *Sin*, were not punished, though God did shew himself highly offended at them; but he that gathered Sticks on the *Sabbath*, after the Promulgation of the Law from Mount *Sinai*, was stoned to death by the whole Congregation of *Israel*. So that the Law of the *Sabbath* seems then first to have taken place, and be of full force, binding the *Jews* and their Posterity, when it was delivered from Mount *Sinai*. Numb. 15. 35, 36.

Two great Ends God seems to have had in the Institution of the *Sabbath*: *First*, That by prefixing a certain proportion of Time, whereon his Worship, without Failure, or any manner of Excuse, should be celebrated,

he might thereby secure the Continuance of it among Men; which by reason of their corrupt Nature, and Backwardness to Good, might have been in danger to be neglected, or by degrees grown out of use, if the Times had been left to their own Choice or Appointment: Not but that they might lawfully and laudably worship God at all other times, as they had Opportunity; but that at that time none whatsoever might neglect it. *Secondly*, That by fixing on such a Time, and so circumstantiated, as did unavoidably represent to their Thoughts and Apprehensions the true God, whom they ought to worship, he might preserve them from being ensnared or tainted with that Idolatrous Worship which prevailed in the World, and make Idolatry and the Worship of the true God incom-

compatible. This will be better understood by enquiring into the *Idolatry* of those Times, which the Scripture frequently informs us to be the Worship of the *Heavenly Host*, the *Sun*, *Moon* and *Stars*, but especially the *Sun*, which is a Creature so glorious and Majestical in it self, and of so universal Influence, Comfort and Benefit to Mankind, and all the Creatures, that when Men are led never so little too much by their Senses, it is enough to dazle the Eyes of their Understanding, as well as of their Bodies, and tempt them to adore it. Hence God himself, when he forbids the making of any manner of Image for Worship, particularly cautions his People against their too fond gazing on and admiring the *Sun*, *Moon* and *Stars*, and the Danger of so doing; *Lest* (saith he) *thou* Deut. 4:19. *lift up thine Eyes unto Heaven,*

and when thou seest the Sun, and the Moon, and the Stars, even all the Host of Heaven, shouldest be driven to worship them, and serve them, which the Lord thy God hath divided unto all Nations under the whole Heaven. I must confess that I am inclinable to think, that even at this time the *Egyptians*, under some of their Symbols, might pay some kind of Veneration to the *Nile*: For in a Country where they either had no Rain, or none for Good, a River, whose Head was then unknown, and whose unaccountable, yet steady Overflowings enriched their Country beyond all others, so that they seemed to stand in need of nothing but the *Sun* and *Nilus*, might create strange Apprehensions in them, and make them believe that there was some *Divinity* in it: And hence possibly, in succeeding Times, that other
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sort of *Idolatri* might travel to divers other Nations, amongst whom every *River* had its *Deity*, and every *Fountain* was *Sacred*. But however, for *Moses's* Time, and long after, the Scripture takes no notice of any actual *False Worship*, but that of the *Heavenly Host*; a sort of *Idolatri*, which first stole into the World, and long possessed it, and to which all Nations were then addicted. Now, when God made choice of, and established that Day for a *Sabbath*, whereon he himself *rested* from the *Works* of the *Creation*, and doth it in Memory thereof, and makes that the Reason of it, (*It is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God,*) and so circumstantiated the Observation of it, that almost every part of it did naturally call to their Minds that God that made the Heavens, and the Earth, and all things
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that are therein, it must necessarily teach them, that *that God* was only to be worshipped, and not the *Sun, Moon and Stars*, or any *Creatures* whatsoever, which he had created for the Use and Benefit of Man; and for which they ought therefore to be thankful, and glorifie him, and not to worship them as Gods; for that were to *reproach*, and what in them lay to *dethrone* him. So that whilst they were sincere and exact in the Observation of the *Sabbath*, it was morally impossible that they should fall into *Idolatry*; for to worship him as the *Creator of the Host of Heaven*, was to acknowledge them to be his *Creatures*, for the Benefit of which they ought to *praise* him; not *Gods*, which they ought to *worship*: And to worship them as *Gods*, were to deny them to be his *Creatures*, and
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to put them in his stead, and reject him: The Worship of the one was a Contradiction to the Worship of the other, and both could not subsist together. To this purpose it is observable, that whenever the *Jews* fell from the Worship of the true God to *Idolatry*, they instantly neglected the Observation of his *Sabbath*; which would have flown in their Faces, and been an evident Testimony against them, and an undeniable Conviction of their abominable Practices: And therefore the Prophet accusing them that they *polluted God's Sabbaths*, immediately subjoins this as the Reason, *for their Hearts went after their Idols*. And when *Antiochus Epiphanes* made it his Business to destroy the whole *Jewish* Worship, and thereby to root out all the Worship of the true God out of the World, as a principal

Ezek. 20.
16.

1 Macc. I.
45.

Verf. 43.

Levit. 26.
1, 2.

pal thing to effect his Design, he commands by his Letters, that they should *profane the Sabbath and Festival-Days*: And when we are told how far his wicked Purpose was successful, it is said, that *many also of the Israelites consented to his Religion, and sacrificed unto Idols*; and then immediately follows, *and profaned the Sabbath*; as if the one were the natural Consequence of the other; and it had been impossible to seduce them to *Idolatry*, unless he could make them cast off the Observation of the *Sabbath*. Hence it is, that we find a strict Charge of the Observation of the *Sabbath*, and the Prohibition of *Idolatry*, generally to go hand in hand. Thus when God had said to the Jews, *Ye shall make you no Idols, nor Graven Image; neither rear you up a Standing Image; neither shall you set up* any

any Image of Stone in your Land,
to bow down unto it; for I am
the Lord your God; the very
next Words are, Ye shall keep my
Sabbaths, and reverence my San-
ctuary. So when the Prophet
Ezekiel rehearseth God's Com-
mands given to them in the
Wilderness, that they should
not walk in the Statutes of their ^{Ezek. 20.}
Fathers, neither observe their ^{18,19,20.}
Judgments, nor defile themselves
with their Idols; thereby refer-
ring to what they had done in
Egypt, he presently adds, And
hallow my Sabbaths; and they
shall be a Sign between me and
you, that ye may know that I
am the Lord your God. And
throughout the whole Law and
the Prophets, nothing is more
strictly and frequently enjoined,
than the Observation of the
Sabbath; nothing more highly
blamed, or oftener prohibited,
than the polluting it; as if the
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Fate of the whole Worship of God depended in a manner upon this single Institution, and the due Observation of it. And for this Reason, doubtless, it is introduced in that singular manner, and a particular Mark thus set upon it; *Remember the Sabbath-day, &c.* As if whilst they did duly observe that, they could not forget God, nor neglect his Worship; but if they did forget that, they would certainly fall away from him. It was not only a *Sign* betwixt God and them, but their *Security* from *Idolatry* and *False Worship*.

Hence also it is very obvious to observe, that the very *Jewish Rest* it self, or Cessation from Toil and Labour, as considered distinct from the direct Worship on that Day, was of great Use, Signification and Efficacy, as to the Design for which it was
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commanded: For that *Rest* being required to be punctually observed, in Memory of God's Rest or Cessation from the Works of the Creation, and the one made the Reason of the other, the very *Rest* it self did inform them, that it was *the God that made Heaven and Earth*, upon whose Account they rested; and that therefore he alone was to be worshipped as God, and not the *Sun, Moon or Stars*, or any of the Creatures which he had made: And to rest upon that Account, and to worship other Gods, was to give Testimony against, and condemn themselves. And thus we see that the very *Rest* it self was designed as a *Preservative* against *Idolatry*.

And here it may be seasonably considered, with what Strictness and Exactness this *Rest* was to be observed, that
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Exod. 20.

so the Rest of God, upon which Account it was celebrated, might be more strongly imprinted in their Minds, and more powerfully excite them to his Worship. The general Command is, *Thou shalt do no manner of Work, thou, nor thy Son, nor thy Daughter, &c.* That is, no manner of Work which was their usual Business on the other Six Days, and made for their Secular Profit, Benefit, or Advantage: But it is not to be extended to such Works as God himself had commanded, as proper for his Worship on that Day; and therefore they did, without scruple, *circumcise* on that Day; and the *Sacrifices* were performed in the *Temple* on that Day, in the dressing, ordering and managing of which, there was no small Toil and Labour; and yet it was no Breach of the *Sabbath*, as being a direct

direct Acknowledgment of God, and by his Command. Neither was it intended against Works of *Mercy* and *Compassion*; for the most rigid *Jews* thought it lawful to pull the *Ox* or *Ass* out of the Ditch on the *Sabbath-Day*, and upon that account our Saviour justifies his healing the Diseased on the same Day; nor yet against what was really and truly necessary; upon which Score our Saviour vindicates his Disciples in pulling the Ears of Corn, and rubbing them on the *Sabbath-Day*; for Hunger is a Disease that brings speedy Death, if it have not seasonable Relief: And therefore there is no need to say, (as some do,) that it was done by Dispensation; for doubtless, our Saviour, who came to *fulfil the Law*, would never give his Disciples a License to *violate the Sabbath* while it was in force.

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Exod. 16.
23.

Verf. 25.

But more particularly, there are several things prescribed as to the manner of observing this *Rest*; as, First, They were not only forbid common Labours, but even the dressing their ordinary Provisions on that Day. Therefore, on the Day before the *Sabbath*, saith *Moses*, *Bake that ye will bake to day, and seeth that ye will seeth; and that which remains over, lay up for you, to be kept until the Morning*, And when they had observed his Order, on the next Day, which was the *Sabbath*, he says, *Eat that to day, for to day is a Sabbath unto the Lord: i. e.* They should forbear even that seeming necessary Labour of dressing their Victuals on that Day, in Memory of *God's Rest*; thereby continually to immind them of that *God* whom they ought to *worship*. Hence, I suppose, arose that Mistake amongst the *Heathens*.

Heathens, who often ridiculed the *Jews* as fasting on that Day: But their Errour sprang from their Ignorance of the Reason of their Actions; for the *Sabbath* was a principal *Festival* among them; and though they dressed their Provisions the Day before, yet there is not a *Jew* to this Day, but he will fare better than ordinary on the *Seventh Day*, though he pinch for it all the other *Six*. Another Command which *Moses* gives in reference to this Rest, is this, *Abide ye every Man in his Place*, Exod. 16. *let no Man go out of his Place on* ^{29.} *the Seventh Day*. But here we must be careful rightly to understand what is meant by *his Place*: For some tell of strange Extravagancies that certain superstitious *Jews* have run into by mis-interpreting this Command; as if a Man was neither to *lie along, stand, or walk,*

The Scripture-History

walk, but sit still all the *Sabbath-Day*: Others did not limit the Postures, but were no less frantically zealous; asserting that a Man ought to abide all the Day in that very place where he happen'd to be on the Beginning of the *Sabbath*. But there was no such thing intended: And that we may the more clearly understand what is here meant, we must know that this Command was given in the Wilderness, where the People were encamp'd about the Tabernacle; from whence to the farthest Tents, most agree to be about a Mile: Now from thence to the Tabernacle they must go, because there was a holy Convocation commanded to be on that Day, where they ought in Duty to appear. And therefore, by their Place here must be meant, not the *Place* strictly where he *sate, lay or stood*, nor his *whole Tent*,
nor

nor what was afterwards *his Habitation*; but the *Camp of Israel*, out of which he might not go, either to gather Manna, or for any Servile or Secular Employments; but in which he might, and must go from his Tent to the Tabernacle, for the Worship of God. This Space is commonly accounted a *Sabbath-Day's Journey*, which some will have to be one, others two Miles; and so it might be said to be properly enough, whilst they were in the Wilderness: But if we pursue the Reason of the Thing, which was, the Allowance of Travelling from their Abode, to the Place of God's publick Worship; then, when they came to be settled in the Land of Canaan, a *Sabbath-Day's Journey* seems to be all that Space between the *farthest Habitation* and the *nearest Synagogue*, or Place of Divine Service: For
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to me it seems plain, that beside their *Synagogues* properly so called, they had their *Prosen-chai*, *Oratories*, or *Places of Prayer*, to which they did resort, where either they had no *Synagogue*, or none which they could conveniently reach: But even herein is sufficient Restraint from Labour for all profane Uses, and a *Rest* in every thing but that *Toil* they took for the Service of God, for whose Honour they rested, and whose Service their Rest directed to them. Another Command given the *Jews*, with respect to this *Rest*, was this; *Ye shall kindle no Fire throughout your Habitations upon the Sabbath-day*. This some interpret too loosely, some too strictly: Those who think this spoken with respect to the *Tabernacle*, (of which Mention next follows,) that no Fire should be there made on the *Sabbath-Day*,

Exod. 35.
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Day, to further the Work of it; which, say they, teaches us, that the Work of the *Tabernacle* was to give place to the *Sabbath*, I think speak little to the purpose; for it is expressly spoken with respect to their *Habitations*, not the *Tabernacle*; nor could the necessary Sacrifices be made without Fire. But this Precept hath certainly a farther Design to ratifie and ascertain that *Rest* which was peculiar to this Day, by which they were put in continual Remembrance of the Creator of Heaven and Earth, whom therefore they ought to serve, and not the Creature; for on other Festival Days (even on the *Passover*) which related not to this *Rest*, it was lawful for them not only to *kindle Fire*, but to *dress Provi-* Exod. 12.
sions: And yet I cannot but ^{16.} think them too strait-laced, who would not allow so much as
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the striking Fire out of a Flint; or the feeding a Lamp with a little Oil, though it were in danger of going out. I do not think that it was designed that they should make no Fire if the Cold was so vehement as might endanger their Health, or incapacitate them for the Service of God; or that it was not lawful to light a Candle to see to read, or perform any other holy Offices, whilst they sat upon some of the former part of their *Sabbath*, which was Night. But it is plain, that they might not kindle any Fire to dress their Provisions, (but must do it the Day before,) and consequently they might not do it for any Servile, Sordid, or Secular Uses, which might seem to pollute that *Rest* which was commanded, in Memory of the Almighty's Rest from the Creation. In all which Things we see how carefully

carefully this *Rest* is secured, to be a constant Monitor to them of that God whom they ought to serve.

From the *Rest* of the Day, let us proceed to the *Service* of it. As a Religious Worship, devout Service, and publick Acknowledgment of God was fitly intermingled with a *Rest* from Extra-religious Labours; so it would have seemed incongruous to have rested upon this Account, that God the Creator of Heaven rested from his Labours, and not openly to have given Praise and Glory to him, and profess themselves to be his Servants; especially when the Design of that *Rest* was to admonish them that they ought to be so, and to engage them to be so. Hence we find the *Rest* and the *Worship* joined together; *The Seventh Day is a Sabbath of Rest, an holy Convocation.* Upon what

Levit. 23.3.

The Scripture-History

Account they rested they themselves knew, but it was not so well known to others; and by that the ignorant World might take them to be a sluggish or humourous People, but could not thence know what God they worshipped and adored: But by their holy Convocation, and their joint Consent in the Worship and Service therein performed, they did openly, in the Face of the World, profess themselves to be *Worshippers* of the God of *Israel*, *who made Heaven and Earth*; and that in opposition to all *False Gods*, and all the *Idolatrous Worship* then in vogue in the World. The Heart and secret Practices are known only to God, and by them Men cannot judge; but then is God glorified amongst Men, his Honour and Sovereignty asserted, and others invited to the right Way, when
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of the SABBATH.

101

he is publickly acknowledged, and openly worshipped and served in a Way becoming the Majesty of Heaven and Earth: And to with-hold this publick Worship, is, at least, to profess our selves *ashamed* of him, and, in effect, to *renounce* and *deny* him. Hence saith our Saviour, in the Gospel, *Whosoever shall be asha-* Mark 8. 38.
med of me, and of my Words, in this adulterous and sinful Generation; of him also shall the Son of Man be ashamed, when he cometh in the Glory of his Father, with the holy Angels. And what in St. Mark is called being *ashamed* of him, in St. Matthew is called *denying* of him: *Whoso-* Matth. 10.
ever (saith our Saviour) shall 33.
deny me before Men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in Heaven. Upon this Account it is, that the Authour to the Hebrews exhorts us not to Heb. 10. 25.
forsake the assembling of our selves

F 3 together.

Rom. 10.
10.

together. Hence also this External Profession is made necessary to our acquiring Happiness; *For (saith St. Paul) with the Heart Man believeth unto Righteousness, and with the Mouth Confession is made unto Salvation.* And when this is done unanimously and solemnly in publick Worship, it proclaims God's Name to the World, gives greater Glory to him, and highly recommends it to the rest of Mankind.

Numb. 28.
9, 10.

But to return to the *Law*: Another Part of the Service or Worship of that Day, was, the particular Sacrifice thereon to be performed, which immediately after the Establishment of the Daily Sacrifice, we find thus prescribed, *And on the Sabbath-Day, two Lambs of the first Year, without Spot, and two Tenth Deals of Flower for a Meat-Offering, mingled with Oil, and the Drink-Offering thereof. This is the Burnt-Offering*

Offering of every Sabbath, beside the continual Burnt-Offering, and his Drink-Offering. Wherein as we plainly see that the *Jews* were required to worship God, even with their Substance, in a more plentiful manner on that Day than at other times; so we may here learn, (that I may observe that now by the by,) that the *Jewish Sabbath* is now *abrogated*, or rather *expired*: For if that *Sabbath* were now in *force*, the *Services* wherewith it was commanded to be continually observed, must also be in *force*; but no *Christian* now will allow of those *Sacrifices*, and therefore ought not to insist on that *Sabbath*. Nor is it to any purpose to alledge, that *Sacrifices* were tied to the Temple at *Jerusalem*, and that it is now in the Hands of Unbelievers; and that the *Jews* themselves, when debarred from the Temple, were

not bound to sacrifice; for as we are *Christians*, we do affirm that *Temple-Worship* it self to have ceased; and that though *Jerusalem* and the *Temple* were in our Hands, and entirely in our power, yet we ought not to sacrifice; for so to do, were to acknowledge the Law of *Moses* to be still in force, and consequently that the *Messias* was not yet come; which were to overthrow the whole Oeconomy of the *Gospel*, and *Salvation by Christ*; which is the Argument *St. Paul* frequently presseth against the *Judaizing Christians* of his Time, who urged the Necessity of observing the Law of *Moses*; and which I may have Occasion to use, and more fully explain hereafter.

We have considered how this *Sabbath* ought to be observed, and it may now be to our purpose to consider on whom the
Obliga-

Obligation lay, thus to observe it: And we find that it extended to all *Jews*, of what Rank, Quality or Condition soever; not only to *Governors*, *Rulers*, and *Masters* of Families, but even to *Children* and *Servants*; and so far as concerned the *Rest* of the *Sabbath*, even to the *Stranger* that was within their *Gates*; yea, even to their very *Cattel*. By the *Stranger within their Gates*, I take to be meant, not only their *two sorts* of *Profelytes*, such as had either submitted to their whole Law, and embody'd themselves with them; or else were Favourers of their Religion, but not wholly come up to them; but even *all Strangers* whatsoever, who came thither by way of Travel or Trade, or any manner of Business. These, while they had the Government in their own Hands, they did constrain

to *rest* on that Day, though they did not admit them to their *Worship*; for to have suffered them to do otherwise, had been to have made them a Scandal and Snare to the *Jews*: For as their very Loosness had been offensive to such as were zealous of God's Honour; so to have permitted them at that time to trade or barter, had been to encourage a strong Temptation to the *Jews*, who were a People much addicted to their Worldly Advantages, to profane their own *Sabbath* for Gain. They could not, indeed, help this when they were under the Government of Strangers; but the Command being extended to no other Strangers but such as were within their Gates, under their Protection, and consequently in their Power, and at their Command, it is plain that it was not meant to other

other Strangers, but only for the Commonwealth of the *Jews*, and those who were amongst them, and therefore must stand and fall with them; that is, last and continue while that Dispensation lasted, and was in force, and cease when that ceased; and that being now ceased, we must conclude their *Sabbath* to be so too.

But besides God's *Resting* on the *Seventh Day* from the *Works* of the *Creation*, there is another Reason given for the *Jewish Rest*; and that is, That that God who made Heaven and Earth, had also with a stretched-out Arm, and with Signs and Wonders, delivered them out of *Egypt*, where they lived in miserable Slavery, and had brought them into a State of Liberty, Ease and Comfort; and therefore, in Memory of that wonderful Deliverance, and Thankfulness for it,

it, they should not only rest themselves, but permit even their Servants so to do, as remembering that they *themselves* were Servants in the Land of Egypt. Now this Reason being peculiar to the *Jews*, and to no other People, it is an Argument that the *Sabbath* was peculiarly intended for the *Jews*, and not for others; as indeed, it was to distinguish them from others.

Deut. 5. 14,
15.

Now though this Command did extend to all the *Jews*, yet not to all alike: The Obligation lay much stronger upon those who (as we say) were *sui juris*, Disposers of their own Actions, than upon those who were under the Command and Dominion of others; nay, where any, contrary to their own Will and Desire, were compelled by a prevailing Power to labour on the *Sabbath*, the Obligation of Rest seems to cease,

cease, at least so far as to the making them liable to any Punishment or Blame; though it is much otherwise as to them who enforced it. It were a very hard Case, if a Servant, who would rest with all his Heart, and be thankful to his Master for it, should be run all along upon this *Dilemma*, that he must either incur the Wrath of God if he did labour, or suffer all the ill Usages and Cruelties which a hard-hearted Master could inflict upon him if he did not labour. And therefore we see that a wise and merciful God hath so ordered the Matter, that though the *Ease* belongs to the *Servant*, yet that he might not be hinder'd from it, the *Command* is directed to the *Master*, *Thou, nor thy Son, nor thy Daughter, thy Man-Servant, nor thy Maid-Servant, &c.* The Command is given to those
to

to whom these Sons or Servants did belong; and they were not only to keep the *Sabbath* themselves, but to be Guardians and Conservators of it as to others. If the *Servant* indeed did *labour* of his *own Will*, it was his *own Crime*; but if the *Master* saw or suffered it, it was also his *Crime*; if he *commanded* it, it was a *double Crime*; if he *enforced* it, was still a *higher Crime*. The Servant was then as a Tool or Instrument in the Hand of the Master, the Work (which in itself is no Harm) is his, but the Violation of the Command is the Master's; for where the Person to whom the Command is directed; and the Person concerned in the Matter directed, are distinct, the Breath of the Command is always a Crime in him to whom the Command is directed, but not so always to the Person concerned only in the

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the Matter directed. Thus here it is commanded, that not only his Son and his Daughter, his Man-Servant and Maid-Servant, but not so much as his Ox, or his Ass, or any of his Cattel, shall do any manner of Work. Now if the Ass had been made to carry a Burthen, or the Ox yoked and sent to plow, none would accuse them of Sin, though they were certainly guilty who caused it. But perhaps you will say, the Ox and the Ass are not Reasonable Creatures, and therefore not capable of Sin, properly speaking: Nevertheless, they are here concerned in the Matter of the Command. But however, take this farther Instance; It is said, *Thou shalt* Exod. 22. *not suffer a Witch to live:* The ^{18.} *Witch* is here deeply concerned in the Matter of the Command, but the Direction of it is to the Governor. Now will any Man say,

say, that upon this Command the *Witch* is bound to hang her self, cut her own Throat, or some Way or other make away her self? It is indeed her Fault that she is a *Witch*; but it is not her Fault that she *lives*, though it is the *Governor's* Fault that he *suffers* her to *live*, if he know, and have good Evidence that she is such a kind of Creature. Indeed, no Servant is so entirely a Slave, but that in many Things, and at many Times, he is Disposer of his own Actions; and if in such Case he did pollute the *Sabbath*, it was his *Sin*; or if he did freely consent to his Master, commanding the Violation of it, he sinned as well as his Master; but if it was merely by Compulsion, and with Regret and Sorrow of Mind, the *Work* indeed is the *Servant's*, which, considered in it self, was not unlawful; but
the

the *Crime* is the *Master's*, to whom the Command was given, that it should not be done at such a Time: In this Case the Command is given to the Master, that his Servant shall not work; and therefore is it not the Servant's, but the Master's Crime, if he compel him. But I forbear to prosecute this any farther, because our learned *Brerewood*, moved thereto by a very afflicting Case, hath handled this Matter so clearly and fully, that he hath scarce left any Gleanings for them who come after him.

I am not ignorant that some, whose Zeal out-strips their Knowledge, have not very well relished this Interpretation, and possibly may not yet; but I hope it may go a great way towards qualifying them, and abating their Heat, if they shall please to consider that even the
Jews

Jews themselves; and their most zealous Assertors of their Sabbath, were of this Opinion, That those who were in the Power of others, and by mere Force and Compulsion were constrained to any Labour, at other Times innocent, on the Sabbath, did not sin: For if they had accounted it a Sin, they ought to have suffered the most barbarous Cruelties, yea even Death it self, rather than have been guilty of it. Now look upon them in their March, as they were carried away Captive to Babylon, a more tedious Journey than most Islanders are acquainted with; had they then told their Guards, or those who conducted them, and peremptorily stood to it, that on every Seventh Day they would go no farther than a Sabbath-Day's Journey, they would have knocked them on the Head, without more

more ado, and there had been an End of them; they had ceased to be a People, and many Generations past forgotten: And when they were at *Babylon*, they were in the Condition of Slaves, at least the greatest part of them, and that for a long Time; for at the last Descent of *Nebuchadnezzar* it is expressly said, That *those that had escaped* ^{2 Chron. 36. 20.} *from the Sword, carried he away to Babylon, where they were Servants to him and his Sons, until the Reign of the Kingdom of Persia.* And can we think that a People who had little Knowledge, and no Regard of the *Sabbath*, and withall, had Power of Life and Death over their Slaves, would suffer their Captives, and a People they hated, to be idle, and do them no manner of Service One Day in every Seven? And in their Captivity it seems they had so learn'd the Trick of this, that

that at their Return to *Jerusalem* they turned it to their Worldly Advantage, and traded, carried Burthens, trod the Wine-Presses, and did all manner of Work on the *Sabbath*; in which, doubtless, the Servants were most visible, and had the greatest Share. But when *Nehemiah* complains of this, and sets himself with all Severity to redress it, he speaks not one Word to the *Servants*, who laboured under the Hardships of others Power and Covetousness; but lays the Fault upon the *Nobles*, and makes it all their Doings, who should not have suffered, much less commanded it to have been done. The Servants Actions he makes to be *their* Crime, thus; *What evil thing* (saith he) *is this that ye do, and profane the Sabbath-Day? Did not your Fathers thus; and did not our God bring*

Nehem. 13.
17, 18.

bring all this Evil upon us, and upon this City? Yet ye bring more Wrath upon Israel, by profaning the Sabbath. It was the Servants did the Work, but he charges the Fault upon the Masters: And doubtless, when they who were commanded not to do any manner of Work themselves on the Sabbath, nor suffer others; when they to whom the Care of the Sabbath was committed, did, on the contrary, promote and enforce the Violation of it; it was not only an high Crime, but an open Contempt of God and his Laws in them; though they whom they used for that purpose, as not being able to help it, might only be as Sufferers in it.

There is one Objection of Moment, which I fore-see will be made against this Branch of the Doctrine of the Sabbath: That if under colour of Force,
and

and ill Usage, a Man may do what God has forbidden, it will not only take away all Suffering for Righteousness sake, and so overthrow the Doctrine of the *Cross*; but encourage Men to venture upon any Sin, and then to clear themselves by laying it to their Charge who compelled them to it, or in whose Power at least it was so to do. And this Objection seems to be founded upon an undeniable Maxim in Christianity, *That we ought not to commit the least Sin, upon the Score of any Force, or any Pretence whatsoever.* By Force, I here mean not such an absolute Force as can actually make another do the Evil, for that is not in the Power of Man; but such a Force as can inflict such grievous Pains and Punishments as are not otherwise to be avoided, but by complying with the Will of him who

who useth it. Now if the Act in this Case could be charged with Sin in the Person so circumstantiated, not approving, and under Force, it would go a great way: But it being what I deny, I now come to clear the Way against this Objection, by shewing my Reasons for so doing. *First* then I say, that the Work or Labour prohibited on the *Sabbath-Day*, is not simply, and in its own Nature unlawful; as to dress the Vineyard, tread the Wine-Presses, plow the Ground, carry in the Corn, or the like; but are made unlawful at such a certain Time by God's positive Command, which to disobey, is sinful; otherwise, the Thing it self were no Sin; for of Works sinful in themselves we speak not; those are forbidden for their own sakes, not only on the *Sabbath*, but every where, and at all Times.

Secondly,

Secondly, I say, that in positive Commands, the Thing is made sinful in the Person to whom the Command is given, and so far forth as it is given to him, if he transgresses: But the Precept of the *Sabbath* is not given after the same manner as the other are; for the other, as, *Thou shalt not commit Adultery, Thou shalt not steal*, are given indifferently, and to all alike; the Command of the *Sabbath* but is given principally to a Man, as he is Disposer of his own Actions; and next, as he may have Power and Command over others; *Thou, nor thy Son, nor thy Daughter, thy Man-Servant, nor thy Maid-Servant, thine Ox, nor thine Ass*. So that if it take in the *Servant* so far as he is in his own Power; yet it is plainly directed to the *Master* wherein he is in the Master's Power; and all the Reason in the World for it; for

for as he could not well rest under a troublesome Master, so it was scarce possible for him to repair to the holy Convocation, if his Master would not suffer it. And therefore, *Lastly*, I answer, That where the Thing is *sinful in its own Nature*, there a Man ought not to suffer himself to be prevailed on to comply with it by any Allurements, Terrours, Force, or Death it self; he ought to suffer the worst that can be, even all the Evils in the World, rather than commit Sin. But when the Thing is *not unlawful in it self*, but becomes unlawful only by a positive Command, in a Case where that Command reacheth not him, though it may not be commendable, yet it is not sinful: And this is plainly the Case of the *Servant* on the *Sabbath-Day*, hinder'd from pursuing his own good Intentions,

G

tentions, by the Power and Severity of his *wicked Master*. To make this still more plain, I shall set down a double Instance in a Case not unlike: Suppose a *Master* beats and abuseth his *Servant*, with Design to make him *swear falsely* against another, in a Case of pretended Debt, or such like Matter; though he be never so ill used, yet he ought never to comply with his Master's wicked Desire; and if he do, (though never so wronged,) yet he shall stand guilty of *Perjury* before God, and be convicted of it by Man; it is a Crime which he ought not to commit, though Death it self threaten'd him: His Sufferings may somewhat alleviate his Crime, but cannot take away the Sin; for it is a Sin in its own Nature, which Circumstances cannot change, though they may lessen; and for

for it he shall be punished, notwithstanding any Plea of Force. Now on the other hand, Suppose that the *Governor* of a Place commands, under a certain Penalty, all the Shops in a City to be kept close shut upon a certain Day, for which we will suppose him to have a special Cause, and good Reason, and therefore he ought to be obeyed; though otherwise, it had been lawful enough to keep open Shop on that Day: And now suppose that same fore-mentioned *Master*, in a cross-grain'd Humour, to beat his said *Servant*, and not leave till he force him to open his Shop, contrary to the *Governor's* Command. Is not the Case here altered? When the Case comes to be enquired into, whether of the two do you think the *Governor* would punish; the *Master*, who caused his Shop to be

G 2 opened,

opened, in Contempt of Authority; or the *Servant*, who without any dis-respect to the *Governor*, opened the Shop in Compliance with his *Master's* Will, to save his own Hide? Doubtless the *Governor* would punish the *Master*, and pity the *Servant*; if he did not add to the *Master's* Punishment, for abusing the *Servant*. Thus we see that positive Commands in Matters otherwise lawful or indifferent, bind not beyond the Intention of the Law-maker; and therefore Force and Suffering may alter the Case, where it was so intended. And that such is the present Case, may appear from what hath been already said; though even in such Case as this, no Man ought to catch at such Pretences, or act under colour of them, unless he really and actually lie under them.

Con-

Concerning the Practical Observation of the *Sabbath*, from Time to Time, among the *Jews*, it is in general observable, that whilst they devoutly kept the *Sabbath*, it begat in them such a *Reverence* of the *Divine Majesty*, and *Sense* of their *Duty*, that it not only preserved them from *Idolatry*, but from all *Enormous Crimes*; and therefore, among the *Prophets* we find the Observation of that most highly extolled, and earnestly recommended, and all Blessings promised to it; as if that included all other Duties, or necessarily drew them after it. But when they neglected the *Sabbath*, they presently fell, not only into *Idolatry*, but ran headlong into the *grossest* and *vilest Wickedness*. So that when the *Prophets* seem desirous to draw up the highest Charge that can be against them, it is commonly

comprehended in this, That *they polluted God's Sabbaths, profaned his Sabbaths, hid their Eyes from his Sabbaths,* and the like Expressions; as if they would stick at nothing else, when they once dared to do that. The By-turnings are so many, that it is a difficult thing to keep the right Way; and as Men are apt to improve their *Notions*, so also their *Practice* to Extremes: And thus it was with the Children of *Israel*, they were very hardly, for a long time, brought to a due and constant Observation of the *Sabbath*. At first when it was given they could not forbear violating it by going out to gather Manna, even contrary to an express Command: And as soon as it was confirmed, we read of one gathering Sticks on that Day; and though he was by God's special Command publicly

lickly stoned to Death for the Fact, yet even that Severity did not effectually work upon them; but even after God had trained and exercised them so many Years, and, as one would have thought, secured them to him by a continued Series of Miracles; yet even just then, when they were ready to enter into the promised Land, this Complaint is made of them, That *they provoked him to Jealousie with strange Gods, with Abominations provoked they him to Anger; they sacrificed unto Devils, not to God; to Gods whom they knew not, to new Gods that came newly up, whom their Fathers feared not.* It was not so very strange that they should grow negligent of the Sabbath in their Captivity, (and yet that Sin was in a great measure the Cause of it, which ought to have made them the more to

Dent. 32.
16, 17.

fear it:) But it was the highest Ingratitude at their Return, to bring that Sin along with them, and persist in the Practice of it, as from *Nehemiah* we learn they did: But when the Noise of the *Prophets*, continually exclaiming against, and threatening Vengeance for this Sin, had awaken'd them, and the Care of *Rulers* had reformed them, and their own *heavy Sufferings* had convinced them, that Perseverance in that *Sin* would be their *Ruin*, then they ran to the other Extreme, observing the *Sabbath* even nicely and superstitiously, beyond what God required of them; insomuch that in the Time of the *Maccabees*, when *Antiochus Epiphanes* sent his Forces against them, who assaulted them on the *Sabbath-Day*, they would make no manner of Defence; and not only would not cast even a *Stone at*
their

their Adversaries, but would not 1 Macc. 2.
so much as stop the Places where 36, 37.
they lay hid; but cried out, They
would die in their Innocency.
 But by this Means such a lamentable Slaughter was made of them, as made the rest bethink themselves of another Course, who very feelingly argue thus; *If we all do as our* Verf. 40,
Brethren have done, and fight 41.
not for our Lives and Laws against the Heathen, they will now quickly root us out of the Earth.
 And then it follows, *At that time therefore they decreed, saying, Whosoever shall come to make Battel with us on the Sabbath-Day, we will fight against him; neither will we die as our Brethren that were murdered in the secret Places.* And accordingly, we find *Jonathas* very successfully executing this Decree 1 Macc. 9.
against Barchides. But if this had not been lawful before, it was

not their Decree that could have made it so: And if the Law of the *Sabbath* had prohibited it, their Decree had been an Interfering with God's Law, and in some measure a Repeal of it. But even this Decree they afterwards weaken'd by a strait-laced Interpretation, limiting it to *Defence*, and not *Offence*; for which also they finarted by *Pompey* and *Titus Vespasian*. In our Saviour's Time they were so superstitious, and very jealous of doing ill, or indeed any thing on the *Sabbath-Day*, that they would not willingly suffer even another to do good on that Day; and therefore they very maliciously quarrell'd with our Saviour for restoring Sight to the Blind, curing the Lame, and healing the Sick on the *Sabbath-day*: But our Saviour himself having sufficiently and plainly confuted their

their

their Folly herein, I shall not farther insist upon it. Only, hence we may observe, that when Men are restrained from downright Wickedness, and open Violation of God's Laws; yet still they are very apt to entangle themselves in Sin and Folly, even in the Exercise of their Duties; which may warn us to have a watchful Guard upon our selves, and to use all Diligence to understand our Duties arightly.

Having thus far considered what Account the holy Scriptures give us of the *Sabbath*, there remains one very material Thing still to be enquired into; viz. Of what Continuance it was? Whether Perpetual, or Temporary? And if Temporary, then when and how it determined? Now certainly, the *Sabbath* must run the same Fate with the *Law*, of which it was
a Part.

a Part. Now the Law was either typical of Christ, or given with respect to him, and his Coming. When therefore our Saviour came, and had fulfilled the Law in all Righteousness, and settled his own Dispensation, or the Way of Salvation by him, the Law then became of no Force; according to that of the Author to the Hebrews,

Heb. 7. 18. *For there is verily a disannulling of the Commandment going before, for the Weakness and Unprofitableness thereof; for the Law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better Hope did, by the which we draw nigh unto God. And when our Blessed Saviour, after his Resurrection, gave his Apostles their full*
 Matth. 28. *Commission, Go ye therefore and*
 19, 20. *teach all Nations, &c. he therein plainly intimated the Abolishment of the Mosaical Law; for (as the Author to the Hebrews argues)*

gues) *The Priesthood being changed, there is made also of necessity a Change of the Law.* Heb. 7. 12.

Not that the Law was by any particular or special Act expressly *abrogated*, but that it *expired*, ceased any longer to oblige, and yielded and gave way to the Evangelical and Unchangeable Law introduced by Christ: For when a Law is made only for a prefixed Time, there needs nothing more for its Abrogation, but the Approach of that Time, and then it ceaseth in course. Indeed, the whole Law, even the Commandments themselves, considered as given by *Moses*, were not obligatory to the *Gentiles* then, much less to any since, now that the Law it self is void: For let a Law be never so just and good, yet as a Law it only binds them to whom it is given. Now the Law was not given to the *Gentiles*, but to the *Israelites*,

Rom. 2. 12,
14, 15.

Israelites, to separate them from the *Gentiles*: Had it been given to them, they should have been judged by it; but that it neither was, nor should be so, St. Paul plainly teacheth; *As many* (saith he) *as have sinned without Law, shall also perish without Law; and as many as have sinned in the Law, shall be judged by the Law.* And again; *When the Gentiles, which have not the Law, do by Nature the Things contained in the Law; these having not the Law, are a Law unto themselves; which shew the Work of the Law written in their Hearts, &c.* And here the Apostle helps us to a Distinction, and clearly teacheth us how the Moral Law, contained in the Ten Commandments, was obligatory to the *Gentiles*; not by virtue of their being set down by *Moses*, and given to the *Israelites*; but as discoverable

able by the Light of Nature, which would certainly direct them to these Truths, if they did not offer Violence to it: And by this they could not but know the Moral Part of the Fourth Commandment, That God was to be worshipped; and indeed, they did with Universal Consent acknowledge it, though they were wofully mistaken in the manner of performing it. But then as to the Day, or Time, I desire any Man to instruct me how he will discover by the Light of Nature, or where he will find it written in Men's Hearts, That just one Day in Seven, and particularly the exact Seventh Day from the Creation, must be dedicated entirely to that Worship. So that I have often wonder'd what should have moved some Learned Men to run away with a Notion, that a *Seventh-Day-Sabbath*,

Sabbath, even the Time it self, is *Natural* and *Moral* : Not but that I very well approve of the Proportion of Time upon other Reasons, but I like not the Sandy Foundation whereon they build, who while they will needs prove too much, prove just nothing at all.

As to the *Jewish Sabbath*, to assert the Necessity of that, is plainly to relapse from *Christianity*, and to return to *Judaism* : For where will they find any Obligation to it, but in the Law of *Moses* ? Now the Apostle
 Rom. 3. 19. saith expressly, that *What Things soever the Law saith, it saith to them who are under the Law*. For any Man therefore to urge the Necessity of the *Jewish Sabbath*, is to profess himself under the *Law* : And what St. Paul said in the Case of *Circumcision*, will be true in the Case of the
 Gal. 5. 3. *Sabbath*, that he makes himself a
 Debtor

Debtor to the whole Law. For where a Man acknowledgeth himself bound to any one thing by virtue of a Law, by virtue of the same Law he must own himself bound to all it requires. Now what is this, but to seek Salvation by the Law? Whereas St. Paul saith, that *By the Works of the Law shall no Flesh be justified.* Gal. 2. 16. But, which is still worse, by this Practice they not only defeat *themselves* and *their own Endeavours*, but what in them lies overthrow the *Gospel of Christ*, and destroy the *Merits* of his *Incarnation, Life, Death*, and whatsoever he did for our *Salvation*: For he that insists upon the Necessity of any Legal Observances, must do it as taking the Law still to be in force; and so must either, with the *Jews*, deny Christ to be come in the *Flesh*; or else assert the *Insufficiency* of his *Coming*,

Coming, and his Dispensation for our Salvation, unless joined with, and assisted by Legal Observances; which were to make his Coming to be of little or no Use, and in effect both to deny Salvation by him, and reject it. And this is that fatal Consequence which the same Apostle charges on the Practice of the *Judaizing Christians* of his Time; Gal. 2. 21. *For (saith he) if Righteousness come by the Law, then Christ is dead in vain.* And again; Ch. 5. v. 4. *Christ is become of no effect unto you; whosoever of you are justified by the Law, ye are fallen from Grace.*

Farther; The *Jewish Sabbath* it self was a Type, the Use of which ceaseth at the coming of the Thing typified. The Deliverance of the Children of *Israel* out of the *Egyptian* Bondage by *Moses*, which was one Thing in Memory whereof their *Sabbath*

bath was celebrated, was a *Type* and Pledge of our *Deliverance* from the Power of *Sin* and *Death* by the Coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Their *Temporal* Deliverance was typical of our *Spiritual*, which Christ hath wrought. And if their *Rest* did typifie Christ's Resting in the Grave that Day, that is long since performed; and therefore it would be absurd now to use it upon that Account: And if it did typifie the Eternal Rest of the Saints in Heaven, it did typifie that to be obtained by Christ; and he hath now much better and stronglier assured us of it, than it was possible we could be by Types and Shadows; so that it is now of no Use on that Account. Hence *St. Paul* saith of the *Sabbath*, and some other Things, that *They are a Shadow of Things to come, but the Body is of Christ.* Col. 2. 17.

Which

Which is to say, that the Obligation and Use of them ceaseth at his Coming. He that will be an Advocate for the *Jewish Types*, I desire him well to consider how he will avoid being driven to a Necessity of pleading also for their *Sacrifices*; I doubt the one will draw the other after it; and yet I do not learn that there are any calling themselves *Christians*, so far deluded as to offer at that; and therefore it is needless to lose Time in writing against it.

But to what purpose should I struggle any longer about this Matter, when the holy Scripture hath plainly determined the Case for the *Expiration* of the *Jewish Sabbath*? St. Paul reproving and disputing against the *Galatians*, for adhering to the Prescriptions of the Law of *Moses*, saith thus; *Ye observe Days; and Months, and Times:*

Gal. 4. 10,
11.

I am

I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed on you Labour in vain.

To have observed any such Days or Times which were set apart for God's Worship, according to the Purity of *Christianity*, could not have made him afraid of them; but rather would have rejoiced him, in hope of their Perseverance: But it is the Observation of the *Jewish Feasts*, which he here opposes; which being observed (as they did) with an Opinion of Necessity to Salvation, was inconsistent with the Doctrine of *Salvation by Christ alone*; which might justly make him afraid of them. Now of these *Feasts*, their *Sabbath* was one; and he speaks in general, and excepts none. If the *Sabbath* had been excepted, it being a *Feast* so solemn, and recurring so often, certainly some particular Care had been taken of it,
that

Col. 2. 16.

that it might not seem to be condemned with the rest: But neither here, nor elsewhere, is there any such Exception. But to put the Matter out of all doubt, the same Apostle expressly names the *Sabbath*, with the other *Festivals*; *Let no Man therefore* (saith he) *judge you in Meat or Drink, (i. e. Meats or Drinks prohibited by the Law of Moses;) or in respect of any holy Day, or of the New Moon, or of the Sabbath-Days.* From whence I think it is evident, that in the Sense and Judgment of the Apostle, the Obligation of the *Jewish Sabbath* was then *expired*, and *Christians* were at liberty to observe it no more than another Day; not but that they might take Occasion, in a particular manner to serve and glorify God on that Day; but that they were not to be censured or condemned as faulty,

faulty, if they did not look upon themselves as under any Obligation to observe it, as being commanded by the Law of *Moses*: The Obligation of it was ceased, and it was become to them as a common Day; and as such they might use it, without any Imputation of a Crime.

It will readily be acknowledged, nor is it any Prejudice at all to this Doctrine, if it be rightly considered, that we find *Christians* paying some Deference to the *Sabbath* for some time after the *Resurrection* and *Ascention* of our Saviour; for the *Mosaical Law* came from the Almighty, though not designed to be everlasting; and had been attested with Signs and Wonders, and therefore it was not to be cast off with Contempt, but decently laid aside; and some Time was to be allowed to win Men off from their rooted Prejudices.

But

But the principal Reason I take to be this, That as our Saviour faith of himself, that *he was not sent but to the lost Sheep of the House of Israel*, so he recommended that People to the particular Care of his Apostles; and we may observe them so closely labouring with them, that when they were dispersed upon the Persecution, many would preach the Gospel to the *Jews* only; and there was need of the Expence of a Miracle to convince them, that *Repentance unto Life was granted to the Gentiles*. Now the *Jews*, in their chief and first Care, were rigorous Observers of their *Sabbath*, and failed not to assemble together on that Day: Where therefore could the Apostles, or any others, so conveniently find them to preach Christ to them, as when they were met at their Synagogues? Upon this Account, you

Acts II.
17, &c.

you find even *St. Paul*, the most zealous Assertor of *Christian Liberty* against *Jewish Observances*, frequently to enter into the *Jewish Synagogues* on the *Sabbath-Day*, and labour to convert them: Not that he thought himself under any *Obligation* to keep their *Sabbath*, but that their *Sabbath* afforded him an *Opportunity* more effectually to recommend the *Christian Doctrine* to them, and thereby to give more *Glory* to God. And I believe that you will scarce find that the *Apostles* at any time preached on the *Sabbath-Day*, but in the same place you will find a *Jewish Synagogue*; as at *Antioch, Thessalonica, Corinth, &c.* Acts 13, But though they did preach for *&c.* their Conversion on the *Sabbath-Day*, yet that which was peculiar to the *Christian Religion*, (as the Breaking of Bread, or Administration of the blessed

Eucharist,) they did not then, but on the *Lord's Day*. But when the Obstinacy of the *Jews* had utterly discouraged the *Apostles*, and became dangerous to the *converted Gentiles*, and had perfected the *Schism*, then all Deference to their *Sabbath* was totally laid aside: And though that Compliance for a Time (in Tenderneſs to the *Jews*, not out of any Conſcience to the Day) might beget a Reſpect for it for a Time, in ſome Places; yet that ſoon wore out, and the whole Church of God forbore, if they forbade not, any Obſervation of the *Jewiſh Sabbath*: It is certain ſome Churches took ſpecial Care to forbid it, for fear of its becoming a Snare and Temptation to fall away to *Judaism*.

There is a ſlight Objection which ſome offer, That our Sa-

Matth. 24.
20.

viour bids them *pray that their*
Flight

Flight be not in the Winter, nor on the Sabbath-Day. But this is not spoken in Confirmation of their *Sabbath*, but by way of Prediction of the *Miseries* that should befall them, and which that very Errour concerning the *Sabbath* should make fall heavier upon them; for the *Jews* were at that time superstitious Observers of their *Sabbath*, and would chuse rather to die than to seem in the least to violate it; and upon that Account quarrelled and hated our Saviour; and he knowing their *Obstinacy*, that they would not be convinced, and fore-seeing and lamenting their *Destruction*, bids them pray that their *Flight* might not be on the *Sabbath-Day*, because their *Errour* concerning it would bring the greater *Destruction* upon them; for if they obstinately refused to fly farther than a *Sabbath-Day's Journey*, common-

ly reputed at most not above two Miles, they must unavoidably fall into the Hands of their Enemies, and consequently be all either slain, or made Slaves; which accordingly happen'd under *Titus Vespasian*; and they then paid sufficiently for that Errour, and their Obstinacy in it. Thus these Objections being answered, I think the foregoing Arguments may prove to any impartial considerate Man, that from and after the Resurrection of our Saviour the Obligation of the *Jewish Sabbath* ceased to them, and to all others, if it ever obliged any others.

CHAP. III.

Of the Lord's Day.

THE *Sabbath*, as a *Mark* of *Judaism*, being dismis-
 sed to keep company with the
Law of *Moses*, if we find not
 out some stated Time which
Christians are bound to conse-
 crate or set apart to the Wor-
 ship, Honour and Service of
 God, we shall leave them in
 that respect in a worse Condi-
 tion than the *Jews*; for one
 Reason of God's instituting the
Sabbath among the *Jews*, seems
 to be to prevent that Neglect,
 and in the End total Failure of
 his true Worship, which hap-
 pen'd to the Old World, when
 the set Times of his Worship
 seem to have been left to the
 Gratitude, Discretion and good
 Inclinations of Men, which

were soon over-born by their Corruptions. And though *Christians* have stronger Motives, and more manifold Obligations to continue firm and stedfast in the Worship of God, than either the Old World, or the *Jews*; yet they have the same Corruptions, evil Propensities of Nature, and Variety of bewitching Temptations to withdraw them from it; and therefore the like Helps and Restraints seem to be no less necessary for them, than the *Jews*: And accordingly, upon the Expiration of the *Jewish Sabbath*, we find the *Lord's Day* set apart for the *Christian Worship*, and that celebrated by *Christians* with an universal Consent.

It were more for our Comfort and Advantage, religiously to observe the *Lord's Day* in the true *Worship* of God, than to perplex our Minds with nice

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Speculations, and intricate *Controversies* about it: But since the subtle or perverse Wits of Men have and do trouble the World with these Matters, it is become requisite and needful to clear the Way, as far as we can, from these *Disputes*, that so we may fall quietly and comfortably to the Practice of our *Duties*.

The first and great Controversie is, Upon what Authority the Observation of the *Lord's Day* is founded? Some who are very zealous for the *Sabbath*, (as they call it,) will have it to be a Translation of the *Jewish Sabbath*; and perhaps they may mean well, but their Position is dangerous and incongruous; for to make the *Lord's Day* a Translation of the *Sabbath* from the *Jews*, were to fetch its original Authority from the *Jewish Dispensation*; which were a great Disparagement to the *Gospel*,

and would endanger the inclining Men to a Return to *Judaism*. Neither do they consider that the *Sabbath* was so proper to the *Jews*, that it was not translatable from them to the *Christians*, and to the *Lord's Day*; for as to the Day or Time, their *Sabbath* was on the *Seventh Day* from the Creation, or *Last Day* of the Week; the *Lord's Day* is on the *First Day* of the Week, being the *Eighth* from the Creation in one respect, and the *First* of it in another. Now these Times, considering their Habitues, are fixed and immoveable: You cannot translate the *Seventh Day* from the Creation into the *Eighth* from it, or the *First* of it; or if they could do this as easily as they have a Mind to it, yet where is their Authority for it? or who was it that did it? And then as to the Services of the Day, neither

ther are they capable of being translated to the *Christian* Oeconomy, as being not competible to it, nor agreeable with it: As for the *Temple-Sacrifices* proper to that Day, I suppose none will dispute it; and as for the *Service* of the *Synagogue*, it is so appropriated to the *Jewish State*, that if we were tied up to that, it would rather be a Prejudice to *Christianity*, than any Promotion of it: So that here is nothing to be translated. In short, Reasons of Equity and Analogy may in some Cases be drawn from the Law, which may persuade, not enforce: But the State of the *Gospel* is a more perfect and compleat State than that of the *Law*; this weak, insufficient of it self, and expired; that of the *Gospel* strong, sufficient of it self, and unchangeable; so that it needs not to borrow any Authority from the

Law for settling any Constitutions proper to it, as being sufficiently furnished with Authority of its own. The *Jewish Sabbath* therefore being *abolished* or *expired* with the *Law*, we in this Case are no farther to consider it, or its Authority; but are to look on the Celebration of the *Lord's Day* as a *new Institution*, adapted to the *Evangelical State*; and the Authority for it we are to find there, which is the Thing we are now to enquire after.

All except *Judaizing Christians*, to whom Answers have been already given, do acknowledge the Celebration of the *Lord's Day* to stand upon Authority sufficiently obligatory to all who have given up their Names to Christ. But whether that Authority be Divine or Humane, Ecclesiastical or Civil, there is no small Controversie.

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The Laying down of Truth will be the Discovery of Error; and therefore I shall neither trouble my self nor others with a distinct Examination of their several Opinions, but in persurance of my Design, shall content my self with an Enquiry after what Grounds we find for it in the *holy Scriptures*, and the Practice thereupon. In the meantime, as I do think it a very pious and laudable Course for *Christian Governors*, whether Ecclesiastical or Civil, to encourage and enforce any Parts of Christianity by *Humane Laws*; so on the other hand, I apprehend it to be a Thing of very dangerous Consequence to found the Observation of the *Lord's Day* upon any *Humane Authority*; for if it have no better a Support, but subsists merely by virtue of that, by the same Authority the Day may be altered,

or

or the Proportion of Time changed, or it may be abrogated, and wholly laid aside; which were to subject the publick Worship of God, and the open Acknowledgment of our selves to be *Christians*, to the unsteady Will of Man, which certainly God never intended to do: And for this Cause I am unwilling to set the Observation of the *Lord's Day* upon any other *Authority* than what is *Divine*.

But now when we come to make a Search after this Authority, it must be confessed, that express direct *written Precept* we have none for it: If any Person can shew me such a thing, I shall be very glad of it, and thankful for it; but for my own part, I could never yet find it. It remains therefore that we search and try whether we can find any thing that tantamounts to

to it, or comes near it, or is otherwise convincing that it was originally by Authority Divine: And if there be sufficient Grounds or Reasons from Scripture and Practice, thereupon to persuade us that it was by Direction, Order or Command of the Apostles to all Christians, in all Ages, it will hardly be doubted but that they were directed by the Spirit of God in what they prescribed of such standing and universal Use; and therefore, that the Observation of it proceeded from, and stands by a Divine Authority: And what Motives, Reasons or Grounds there are for this, we shall now examine with what Brevity and Clearness we can.

The Scriptures, though they recite not the Precept, or *Original Institution*, yet they give us *fair Intimations* of it, and (as I may call them,) such *formal Exam-*
ples,

ples, as may make us reasonably believe that such a thing was done: And though several Texts seem to look this Way, yet there are three which speak most directly to this Matter: That the *Lord's Day*, or Day immediately following the *Jewish Sabbath*, is meant in every one of them, I shall take for granted, because others have so cleared that Matter beyond all question, that I think it not worth disputing. The Texts I shall take in order, as they lie:

Acts 20.7. *The First speaks thus; Upon the First Day of the Week, when the Disciples came together to break Bread, Paul preached unto them, &c.* As to which Words, you may first observe the Day, the First Day of the Week, *i. e.* the *Lord's Day*; and next, that this is mentioned as the Time when they usually assembled, as a Time known to them, and used by

by them; and therefore must proceed from some Order or Directions: Thirdly, The Business of the Day, *To break Bread*, i. e. to receive the holy Sacrament of Christ's Body and Blood. Whereby you see, that though the Apostles then often went into the Synagogues on the Sabbath-Day, laying hold of the Occasion of the Meeting of the Jews, to preach to them for their Conversion; yet the Christians met together on the Lord's Day, for the Exercises peculiar to Christianity. Fourthly, That this, as an usual Time of their meeting together, gave St. Paul the Opportunity to preach to them; for he called them not together, but they assembled as of Use and Custom, or a Time known and appointed for that purpose. Now it can hardly be imagined how this could be, unless there had been

been some Order made, some Rule or Direction given, which was known to all. The Second
1 Cor. 16. 2. Text is this; *Upon the First Day of the Week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, &c.* Now though the direct Design of this Precept be the making Provision for the Poor, and the raising a Stock in readines by them upon all Occasions for that purpose; yet the manner of raising this Provision is directed to, by laying up something for that End every First Day of the Week, which is the *Lord's Day*; and that as on a Day whereon *Christians* assembled for the Worship and Honour of God, and so was the most likely Time to incite them to liberal and chearful Giving, and the fittest Time that could be appointed for that purpose: For if the *Jews* were commanded
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not to appear before the Lord *empty*, certainly it is more unreasonable for the *Christian*, whether commanded or not, to do so: And the *Christians* being directed to the constant Practice of this on this Day, without farther Notice or Explanation, but bare naming it, 'tis plain that it must needs be well known to them all, and consequently that they must have had some Rule concerning it. The Third is in these Words, relating to the Behaviour of St. *John* on that Day; *I was in the Spirit on* Rev. 1. 10. *the Lord's Day, and behind me a great Voice, as of a Trumpet.* The Trumpet very well becomes the Solemnity of the Day; for amongst the *Jews* they were accustomed not only to call solemn Assemblies, but to recommend, celebrate and set off solemn Days with the Sound of Trumpets: And St. *John*, though in Banish-

Banishment, where he had neither *Associate* of his *Devotions*, nor *Testimony* of his *Actions*, yet very carefully observes this Day, employing himself in *Spiritual Exercises*, (for so is his *being in the Spirit* most commonly understood;) and God approves it by adding a Solemnity thereto, the Sound of the Trumpet, and shewing farther Favours to so diligent a Servant. (Or if those Words, as some think, refer to the Inspiration of the Holy Ghost enabling St. *John* to write the Prophecy contained in that Book; yet being done on that Day, and with respect to the Religious Exercises on that Day, whereby Men are better qualified for the Reception of the Grace and Favours of God, it still more strongly confirms our Assertion.) And as in every one of these Texts is plainly to be seen the Observation

tion of the *Lord's Day*, so in all of them together we have the whole Business of the Day; in the First, the solemn Offices of the publick Worship; in the Second, those Acts of Compassion, Charity and Goodness, which upon meet Occasions, but then especially, are to be exercised towards our Neighbours; and in the Third, those Private Devotions, and holy Employments, wherein *Christians* may exercise themselves when either the publick Worship is over, or they are denied the Use of it.

There are several other Considerations which may induce a modest Christian Temper to look upon the Observation of the *Lord's Day* as a Divine Institution, which I shall now farther pursue. Indeed, the Proportion of Time hath been *warmly* (I am unwilling to say *idly*) disputed: I believe it will be very difficult

difficult for any Man, how great soever his Confidence may be, to give a natural Reason, why rather One in Seven, than One in Five, or One in Ten, must of necessity be observed; but then I think it would be very unreasonable and ungrateful in *Christians*, whose State and Blessings are far superiour to those of the *Jews*, if they should abridge God in this Particular, and allow less Time for his Worship than they did: And when God himself did set a Proportion of One in Seven to those who were once his People, it looks like strange Arrogance in Man to think he can assign a fitter Proportion than God hath done: And I think that it ought to be of some Weight with us, that our Church, by enjoining the *Fourth Commandment* to be read every *Lord's Day*, doth approve the Proportion of One in Seven; for that
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she commands it not to be read, as making the *Jewish Sabbath* obligatory, is plain; for she commands the *Levitical Law* to be read, either as shewing what was then binding, or what Care God took of his People under his several Dispensations, or that Reasons of Analogy and Equity might be thence drawn for our Service, or to shew what better Things God hath done for us, or the like Causes; but is at the same time so far from taking it to be now *binding*, that she looks on such Practice as *unlawful*; nor doth she account any thing binding as purely given to the *Jews*, unless other Reasons now enforce it: And farther, her Practice shews that the *Commandment* is not read in that Sense; for she not only observes not that Day, but condemns the Observation of it, as a *Desertion* of *Christianity*, and *Running* into *Judaism*.

Judaism. That *Command* therefore must be supposed to be read in the general, not the legal Notion of it; *i. e.* to support the Worship of God, to allow of One Day in Seven for it; which, to avoid Uncertainties, she hath fixed on the *Lord's Day*. But then if we suppose that Day of Divine Institution, there is an End of all other Disputes, for then it will stand by a Divine positive Right; and when God commands, Obedience is then our Part without more ado.

Let us now consider the Reasons for which this Day was made choice of, as best adapted to the *Christian Worship*. Now it is agreed on all Hands, and it is evident from holy Scripture, that our Blessed Saviour arose from the Grave, thereby triumphing over Death and Hell, on the First Day of the Week, which, in Memory of his *Resurrection*,

rection, is called the *Lord's Day*: And as his Resurrection doth suppose his Incarnation, Life and Death; so was it necessary in order to his Ascension, and Sitting at the Right Hand of the Father, there to make Intercession for us. On this Day then was not only compleated the Work of our Redemption, but all the Parts of that Mystery have some Dependence on, or Relation to what was done on this Day: Then was the Law fulfilled; then was God's Justice satisfied; then was Hell and Death overcome; then were we reconciled to God in Christ Jesus, if we embrace him by Faith, and frame our Lives by his Rules. And what fitter Day for *Christian Worship*, than that whereon the whole *Mystery of Christianity* was accomplished? What can more inspire us with Zeal and Devotion, raise our Affections, quicken

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our Gratitude, and more effectually prompt us to a ready and willing, as well as a reasonable Service, than the Memory of that Performance which entitles us to Forgiveness of Sin, and Everlasting Life; and makes us capable of all those invaluable Benefits and Blessings which either here or hereafter we hope for as *Christians*? Upon this Account therefore no Day could be more proper for the *Christian Worship* than this.

Another Reason why this Day was made choice of for the *Christian Worship*, was, That thereon was the *Descent* of the *Holy Ghost*, qualifying the Apostles for the Conversion of the World, and the Recovery of Mankind out of that otherwise inevitable State of Perdition and Misery; instructing them in all Truth necessary to our Salvation, and empowering and enabling them to teach

teach it to all others, and conferring those Graces and Abilities which enable us to lay hold of it: For though Christ had perfected the Work of our Redemption and Salvation in it self; yet had we been left to the Guidance of our own corrupt Understandings and crooked Wills, and laid open to all the Wiles and Delusions of *Satan*, and not assisted by the Directions and Graces of the Holy Spirit to lead us to that Salvation so purchased by Christ, without doubt we should still have failed of obtaining it. And what could more powerfully excite our Zeal, Devotion and Thankfulness to Almighty God and our Blessed Saviour Christ Jesus, than the Memory of these inestimable Benefits? And consequently, What Time more fitly appropriated to the *Christian Worship*, than that whereon these Blessings and Be-

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nefits were first communicated to *Christians*? But though this be a grand additional Reason to all of us, yet was it not the primary Reason on which the Observation of the *Lord's Day* was founded; for when the Work of our *Redemption* was fully wrought, and thereby the *Jewish* Oeconomy dissolved, and the Obligation of their *Sabbath* ceased, that there might be no Failure for want of a fixed Time of Worship, soon after the Resurrection, and before the Descent of the Holy Ghost, we find the *Christians* celebrating the *Lord's Day*, as a Day of publick Worship: So that the Institution of it may be reasonably supposed to be amongst those Directions and Instructions which our Saviour gave to his Disciples in those Forty Days he was conversant with them between his Resurrection and Ascension; for he then commanded them,

them, that *they should tarry in the* Luk. 24.49.
City of Jerusalem till they were en-
dued with Power from on high.

And in another place, That *they* Acts 1.4.
should not depart from Jerusalem, but
wait for the Promise of the Father.

In both which is meant, their at-
tending there the Coming of the
Holy Ghost: In order whereunto,
we find them, with other *Chri-*
stians, assembled, not *casually*, but
as at a *known Time*, and with a
joint Obedience, on the *Lord's*
Day; and the Acts of Christian
publick Worship, there expres-
sly mentioned: So that there is
Reason to believe that the *Time*,
as well as *Place*, might be as-
signed by our Saviour; and that
they were fore-warned that the
Descent of the *Holy Ghost* should
be on the *Lord's Day*; which
could not be so reasonably ex-
pected, nor solemnly performed
at accidental Meetings. I confess,
our Translation is not so clear in

Acts 2. 1.

this Matter, in saying that it was *when the Day of Pentecost was fully come*: But with due Submission I do say, that this Rendring doth not reach the true and full Sense of the Original, which ought rather to be translated in these or such like Words, *When the Day of Pentecost was compleated, ended, or fully over*; which it was when the First Day of the Week, or *Lord's Day* began. From all which it seems evident to me, that the Observation of the *Lord's Day* was known before before the Descent of the Holy Ghost, and consequently known and prescribed from the very Beginning of *Christianity*.

And here I think it ought not to be omitted, That the *Observation* of the *Lord's Day* is the *Badge* of our *common Christianity*; and is as much a *Sign, Mark* and *distinguishing Character* of us *Christians* from all others, as the *Observation*

servation of the *Sabbath* was of the *Jews*. Christ hath required that we openly confess him before Men: And in Observation of the *Lord's Day* we do most solemnly confess him, and profess our selves to be his Followers, *i.e. Christians*. And hereby we are distinguished, not only from *Jews* and *Mahometans*, who are either among us, or border on us; but from all others wheresoever, or of what Persuasion soever: For none will observe that Day, or at least not in *Christian Exercises*, but those who profess themselves *Christians*, but distinguish themselves by some other solemn Observation; as the *Jews*, by keeping their *Sabbath* on our *Saturday*; the *Mahometans*, by solemnizing our *Friday*. And by such Observations they are known what they are; or must discover what they are, if the Reason of such Observation be

asked them: For, ask a *Mahometan* why he observes *Friday*? and he will give you a Reason from the Precept of his *Prophet*, (as he calls him;) and that in so doing, he acknowledgeth himself obliged to the *Observance* and *Profession* of the *Law* of *Mahomet*, that *notorious Impostor*. Ask a *Jew* why he observes the *Sabbath*, which is our *Saturday*? and he will tell you that *Moses* their Law-giver so commanded him; and that thereby he openly professeth himself to be bound to *observe* all those *Rites*, *Ceremonies* and *Laws* which *God*, by *Moses*, commanded them; the Obligation of which, his Blindness or Obstinacy will not let him see to have been long since expired and dissolved. And ask a *Christian* why he *observes* the *Lord's Day*? and he must tell you that he doth it in Memory of *Christ's Resurrection*, who thereby compleated the
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the Work of *Redemption*; and that in so doing we *own* our selves to be *Christians*, and expect Eternal Salvation by what he hath done for us, in a due Use of those Means he hath prescribed to us: And this Reason I think may excite all Men, as they would profess themselves *Christians*, and hope for the Benefits of so being, to a constant and diligent Observation of the *Lord's Day*. And if what hath been told me be true, I cannot but judge it an *unsufferable Dishonour* and *Prejudice* to our *common Christianity*, that the *Idolatrous* People in some remote Countries observing some of our *Merchants* not to observe the *Lord's Day*, or any *Religious Feasts* or *Fasts*, have judged them to be worse than themselves, even to be of *no Religion* at all: For they could not believe them to be of *any Religion*, who did not own it in some *solemn Observa-*

tion. Perhaps they might want Ministers, or their Number might be few, or their Stay short; but however, they might have honoured the *Lord's Day*, and professed their *Christianity* in such solemn *Religious Exercises*, as in their private Capacities they were able to perform: And I think there ought to be Care and Caution that such Things be not suffered, if the Information be found to be true.

We have now seen that in the Observation of the *Lord's Day* we openly profess our selves to be *Christians*; that in it we celebrate the Memory of *Christ's Resurrection*, when he compleated the Work of our *Redemption*; as also the *Descent* of the *Holy Ghost*, to furnish the Church and its Members, in their several Stations, with all Powers and Graces, to assist and lead them in the Way of Truth: And farther, that
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it was observed in the very earliest Times of the Apostles, immediately after the Resurrection, and that when the great Praise of *Christians* was, that *they continued stedfastly in the Apostles Doctrine.* And why then should we not think this to be a Doctrine of the Apostles? To this may be added the Universal Practice of the Church of Christ; for what Opinion soever they might have as to some Days or Times in some particular Places, yet this was received and observed from the very Beginning, by all, in all Places, and in all Ages. And whence could this proceed, but from our first Instructors in *Christianity*? Or how could it prevail without their Authority? If therefore we find in Scripture the Practice allowed, but an express Precept not set down, we may reasonably refer it to such Practical Regimental Institutions, the Practice

Acts 2. 42.

whereof was sufficient to mention without an exprefs Precept; because it was known to all, and could not be lost or forgotten, as being incumbent on all *Christians*, at all Times, and in all Places, to keep it up without Intermiffion, for the Profeflion of their *common Christianity*. And it was the unanimous Opinion of all the pious Fathers of the Church, That what was univerfally received by all *Christians*, in all Ages and Places, was at firft delivered to them: Which if we do not admit, I fear we fhall be at a Loss in many Things; for it may be ufeul not only upon this and the like Accounts, but alfo undeniably to prove the true Senfe of many Texts and Precepts of Scripture, which wrangling Seducers pervert, to the deceiving of many weak and well-meaning Perfons. As for inftance: Many deny Baptifm to Infants; and fome have offered

offered at withholding the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper from Women: And though the generality of the Precepts are enough to satisfy any sober Man, and the Parity of Reason between Baptism and Circumcision sufficient to convince any sensible Man in that Point; yet obstinate Men, who make a Trade of Deluding, will not leave bawling, but insist upon little Quirks, and vain Niceties: But when it shall appear that those truly zealous *Primitive Christians*, who lived so near the Apostles Time, as best to understand their meaning, and were not suffered to practice their Precepts in any other Sense than they were meant, did not deny their Children a Right to Baptism, nor Women to the Lord's Supper, but administer'd Baptism to the one, and the Lord's Supper to the other; it must be acknowledged that the Precept of Baptism.

Baptism was intended to extend to the Children of Believing Parents, and that of the Lord's Supper to Women.

If any object to me for this, that I seem a Favourer of *Traditions*, let him know that I am as much an Enemy of those *new Inventions*, and *superstitious Devices*, which some would obtrude upon us under the Notion of *Traditions*, as he, or any Man whatsoever; and do think that nothing can be more dangerous and mischievous to the *Christian Religion*, than to suffer such *Novelties* and *Abuses* to be foisted in among us; and for that Reason shall be as ready as any other, upon just Occasion, to appear against them. But if any Man can produce me a Practice plainly allowed in holy Scriptures, highly useful or necessary for *Christians* in all Ages, founded upon Reasons peculiar to our Religion,

Religion, and embraced by all *Christians* in all Ages and Places, (such as is this which I contend for,) I shall never think it my Business to oppose it.

But perhaps some will say that all Institutions, Directions and Practices of the Apostles are not eternally obligatory, but according to the Subject-Matter or Nature of the Thing, are either temporary and mutable, or eternal and immutable: And for this and some other Reasons, some have made it a Question, whether the Day be not alterable, or the Worship may not be transferred to another Day? As to the Worship it self, it is Moral and Unchangeable, and to some Day it ought to be fixed; for to remove it from all Days, were to destroy the Worship it self; and to leave it arbitrary, were little better. But then, as it is affixed to this or that particular Day, it stands by
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a positive Right; and how great soever may be the Motives to prefer one Day before another, yet what is by positive Right, is in its own Nature alterable; for it is plain that all the positive Laws of the *Jews* were not only altered, but disannulled: And I see no Reason, but that any positive Law may be altered or annulled, at the Will of the Law-maker; the plain Consequence whereof is this, That the Observation of the First Day of the Week, which we call the *Lord's Day*, is in its own Nature *alterable*; but then, whether God *will*, or Man *can* alter it, is another Question, which more concerns us to enquire after, because the Performance of our Duty in a great measure depends thereon.

That God never will alter it, we have all the Reason in the World to believe; for if we look for that, we must expect new Revelations,

velations, and new Miracles to attest and vouch those Revelations; which we ought not in this Matter to do, because we are under the last Dispensation; and God hath declared, that he hath fully revealed his Mind and Will concerning the Salvation of Man, and what he requires of him in order thereto. And to me it also seems out of doubt, that neither any *Man*, or any *Body of Men*, can alter it: For what Man, or particular Church, shall attempt to alter what hath been received down from the Apostles Times, in all Ages, and all Churches, without being condemned of intolerable Insolence, and bold Usurpation upon the Rights of others, if not also upon the Laws of the Gospel, and running all into Confusion? And as for the whole *Christian* Church, dispersed over the Face of the Earth, as Matters are, how is it possible they should
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unanimously agree in such a thing? Or if such a thing should be thought on, what Reason could they give for fixing on another Weekly Day for the common Profession of our *Christianity*, distinct from all our *Christian* Fore-Fathers; and so madly distinguishing the following *Christians* from the foregoing? Or, What better Reason can they shew to pitch upon any other Day than the *Lord's Day*, wherein we apparently celebrate the Memory of our Saviour's *Resurrection*, and the *Descent* of the *Holy Ghost*; and therein, of all the *Mercies*, *Blessings* and *Favours* which we either *have* or *hope for* as *Christians*? Or if they should pretend to some Reasons, yet would not their Authority it self be called in question, and so all Places filled with unnecessary Disputes, and riotous Disorders? For these, and other Reasons which

which might be given, I do think that the Observation of the *Lord's Day* ought inviolably to be continued till the Consummation of all Things, and the Lord himself shall come to judge the Quick and the Dead.

Concerning the Name or Names of the Day, many are very peevish and troublesome: Some even dote upon the Word *Sabbath*, whilst others are as averse to it: And I must confess, that I my self am not very fond of the Word *Sabbath* in this Case, not only as it is a Word appropriated to the *Jewish Oeconomy*, and never used in Scripture but with reference thereunto; but also because those who perniciously insist upon it, usually draw their *Obligation* from the *Jewish Law*, and also seem desirous thence to *justify* their over-rigid, if not *superstitious Practices* and *Observations* upon it; thus endan-

endangering to lead both others and themselves into *Judaism*, which by *Christians* ought to be carefully avoided. However, if we can agree upon the *Thing*, I will quarrel with no Man about *Words*; and if by *Sabbath* they mean no more than what some, in Contradistinction to the *Jews*, have called the *Christian Sabbath*, i. e. the *Christian Worship* on the *Lord's Day*, constituted in the *Christian Church*, I shall no more find fault with them, than with some others, who without any evil Intention, may call it *Sunday*, according to our common Distinction of the Days of the Week; though I do think that the *Lord's Day* sounds best in a *Christian Mouth*.

As to the *Exercises* on the *Day*, and *Manner* of its *Celebration*, but especially as to *Recreations*, there have been and are so very great *Heats*, that it is odds but that he who

who meddles therewith shall feel the one or the other, if not both Parties, fall foul upon his Bones. But having gone thus far, I shall adventure on; and if I get a Knock for my Pains and Good Will, I shall take it as patiently as I can. And in the first place, Great Heed ought to be taken to the *solemn* and *publick* *Worship*; that all who profess themselves *Christians*, especially all those whose Actions are in their own Power and Disposal, do conscientiously attend all along, and join therein with a *holy* *Devotion*, and *Christian* *Zeal*: And at such Times, no idle Loitering up and down, no Recreations, Sports, Worldly Business, or vain Actions, keeping from it, are in any wise to be allowed: For, being the Day is dedicated, not only to the Honour and Worship of God, but also appointed to this End, that we might

might openly profess our selves *Christians* ; in these or any other indecent Courses, to abstain from the solemn Worship, is not only to affront God and his Worship, but amounts to a kind of tacit or implicit Renunciation of our *Christianity*, which we are peculiarly bound at that time publickly to profess. I urge this the rather, that if possible I might rectifie the Mistake of some Persons, who seem to look upon the *Lord's Day* as little other than a *Day of Idleness*, and Relaxation from common Business ; and not considering the great Ends for which it was instituted, are insensible of the great Sin they run into by a Neglect, if not Contempt of the Duties required thereon.

I deny not but that there are several Cases wherein a Man may lawfully absent from the publick Worship, so that it be never done with any wilful Neglect or Slighting

ing thereof. If a Man lie dangerously sick, God who sends the Impediment, sends the Excuse; a Man is not bound in such Case to run the apparent Hazard of his Life, which God hath intrusted him with, that by all lawful Ways he might preserve it, to be employed in his Service, and to his Glory: But if a Man's Sickness have been the Effects of his own Wickedness and Disorderliness, he ought to look upon it as God's Judgment for his Sin, and account himself the Cause of his Inability to perform those Duties which he ought; and ought therefore heartily to bewail it, and firmly resolve to be more diligent for the future, if it please God to restore him: Nor ought every little Illness or Indisposition keep us from the solemn Worship, such as we are more likely to find Relief from, through God's Mercy, in the diligent Attendance

tendance on his Worship, than in the Neglect of it. If a Man be in such Places where he cannot communicate in the publick Worship without Sin, he is not bound to join in sinful Communion, but rather to avoid it; but then he ought to make it up what he can, by doing all he is able in his private Capacity. If as I am going to the publick Worship, I should see my Neighbour's House on fire, and my Help seem necessary or requisite, I may stay and do all I can to quench it, and prevent my Neighbour's Ruin, or great Loss. If I know of a Conspiracy against a Man's Life, which is likely to take effect, if not prevented at that time, and it is in my power to prevent it, I think I not only may, but ought to omit going to the publick Worship at that time, that I may defeat such great Mischief and Wickedness. In short, Whatsoever great Good may be done,

done, or Evil prevented, the Opportunity of doing which would be for ever lost, it not laid hold on at that time, I take to be a just Excuse for absenting from the publick Worship for that time. But then these Cases are rare, and are far from being a Warrant to absent at other Times; neither ought we to make that a Reason for doing a Thing at that time, which may be done at another time; neither ought we to shelter our Neglect under any false or feigned Pretences, nor set up any but what are real. And yet beside such rare Cases, there is also a *common Case* arising from the *common Necessities* of Mankind; when some stay at home, especially in great Families, either to *provide* for the rest, who are at the publick Worship, or else to be a *Safeguard* to the House and Goods in it; for the *Lord's Day* is a *Festival*, a Day of Joy and

and Gladness, wherein, according to our Ability, and soberly, we ought to *cheer our selves*, and *comfort the Poor*; which cannot be, unless fitting Provision be made for it; and to leave a House well furnished, without any Care, were not only a *Temptation*, but an *Invitation* to Thieves to break in and steal: And those who thus stay away, seem not to stay without some reference to the *publick Worship*, they being either the *Providers for*, or the *Security* of those who are at it: But then Care ought to be taken that such Persons may either be at the publick Worship one part of the Day, or others may take it in Turns with them, as shall be most convenient; lest in time such Omision should grow into an *Irreligious Temper*, or *Habitual Neglect*.

As for the remaining part of the Day, which is not taken up in the publick Worship, I know
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not how it can be better spent, according to our Strength and Ability, than in doing good to others, and exercising our selves in Acts of Devotion and Piety, in Meditation, Reading and Prayer, and all such Exercises as tend to the better *Information* of our *Understandings*, and the *quickening* our *Wills* and *Affections* in the *Performance* of *Religious Duties*, and the *begetting* in us a *Love* to them; and all this according to every Man's State and Condition of Life: For some Things are more suitable to single or private Persons, others to those who are Masters or Governors of Families; the one may be swallowed up with his private Devotions, which if the other should be, he might give Occasion to his Family to neglect their Duties, or (which is worse) afford them Opportunity to run Riot. A Conscientious Care, with Respect had

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to

to his State and Condition will in course lead every Man to what is proper to be done in this Case: But the great-Controversie is concerning Works and Recreations, and whether any; and if any, then what are lawful?

As to the first of these, It is observable that the *Jewish Sabbath* and the *Lord's Day* are founded upon different Reasons; theirs respected *God's Rest* from the *Works* of the *Creation*; and that *Rest* was so interwoven with their *Service*, that it was an *Essential Part* of their *Worship*; was *typical*, and enjoined them for *special Reasons*, (as hath been already shewed;) and was so *strict*, that they looked upon the *Killing* the *Sacrifices* and *Circumcision*, though both commanded by God, to be in some sort a *Violation* of that

Matt. 12. 5. *Day*; as may appear from our Saviour's Reasoning with the *Jews*. But the *Lord's Day* hath for

for its principal Reason, the *Resurrection* of our blessed Saviour, and so seems to be founded rather upon *Action* than *Rest*, but yet upon such *Action* as is *Religious*; by which Means a *Rest* accidentally appertains to it, as requiring a *Cessation* from all such *Labours* and *Employments* as are any ways *dishonourable* to, or *inconsistent* with the *Worship* and *Service* of the *Day*. That those Works which are unlawful at all Times, are much more unlawful at this Time, I suppose every one will grant: But we are farther to consider, that this is a Day dedicated to God, and set apart for his Service; and therefore it is not to be profaned with the common Work of other Days: It being *his* Day, we must do *his* Work, not our *own*; and this will oblige us to desist from the *Use* and *Exercise* of all *gainful Employments*, whereby we per-

sue our own *Interest* and *Profit*, and not *God's Glory*; and though they may not be directly opposite to it at other Times, yet they seem to be so at this, because they are a Hindrance to God's Worship, and juttle it out, and take its place. Indeed, I think a greater Latitude ought to be allowed to those *Employments* which provide for the *Necessities of Life*, especially with respect to Persons in such Circumstances that they cannot well be otherwise supplied; for *Christianity* doth not teach us to be *cruel* and *inhumane*. But here I would put in two Cautions; *First*, That those who do use such Employments at such Time, do it not with respect to *Profit* and *Worldly Interest*; but be content rather to make themselves *Savers* than *Gainers*, as acting then upon a Principle of *Charity*, not of *Trade*, as at other Times. *Secondly*, That the Supplies

plies they afford be for *Necessity* or *Refreshment*, not for *Disorder* or *Riot*. If any Man be so rigorous as to disallow this, I desire him to consider when he sends his Provisions (perhaps out of a scrupulous Humour of doing it by himself, or at home) to the *Baker* or *Cook* to be dressed, whether he do not, according to this his Opinion, occasion and indeed tempt them to sin, and so become guilty himself of the Sin for which he condemns others? If we consider not the Propensities of Men, but the bare Thing 'it self, any one would think that the strait and middle Way were the easiest, as well as the safest; but Experience confutes us, and we find that it is very difficult for Men to forbear turning aside to the one or the other Extreme. Yet, in short, though Devotionary Acts, and such as directly tend to the Acknowledgment and

Worship of God seem most proper for the Day, yet other good Works are not improper; and there may be Room for both, without Injury to either; and therefore no sober Men ever denied the Lawfulness of Works of *Necessity* and *Mercy* on that Day: And hence it is observable, that our blessed Saviour did many of his miraculous Cures on the *Jewish Sabbath*, in the very Face of the *Pharisees*, who for that judged him a *Sabbath-breaker*; but he stopped their Mouths with this unanswerable Reason, amongst others, That *it is lawful to do well on the Sabbath-Days*: And if we followed the Example of our Saviour in *doing good*, rather than that of the *Pharisees* in *censuring* others, we should have the *Lord's Day* better kept, and *more Good* done.

Matth. 12.
12.

It will be a very ticklish Point to discourse of any Recreations
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on that Day; for some are severe to that Extremity, that they will neither allow any, nor suffer them to be named on that Day; and yet (if they could have Patience to hear themselves told of it) their *Practice* shall at the same time condemn their *Opinion*. I have known some who have been so scrupulous, that when the publick Worship was over, they would scarce stir out of their Doors, nor suffer any others; and yet would find a Time on that Day to *discourse* and *contrive* all their *Worldly Affairs* for the Week following, or else employ a great part of it in *censuring* and *reviling* their *Neighbours*, and thereby *infecting* their whole *Family* with a *proud censorious Humour*; which I take to be Time every jot as ill spent, as if some of it had been allowed to harmless Recreations. For my own part, I should be highly pleased.

pleased to see any Man arrive at that pitch of Spirituality, that he could proceed the whole Day in a continued Exercise of strict Acts of Devotion and Piety: But then I think the better any Man is, the more charitable and compassionate he is to others; and will be willing to trail them on as he can, and as is most likely to make them better Proficients. If we lay a *strong Man's* Burthen upon a *Child*, he will sink under it: Nor do we expect that from a *young Apprentice*, which we do from an *Artist*; nor from every *Artist* alike. And if we consider the Generality of *Christians*, we may observe not only that the *Body* hangs as a Clog upon the *Soul*, but that the *Soul* it self is not sufficiently qualified and strengthened to persevere long in an uninterrupted Course of Spiritual Exercises; but that in many, perhaps in the best, though the *Spirit*.

rit be willing, yet the *Flesh* sometimes is so weak as not to be able to hold out; and to force them beyond their Strength, would be to make them *faint* and *languid*; yea, perhaps to make the Thing it self *troublesome* and *loathsome* to them, so that they shall begin to seek for all Occasions to avoid it; and thus the *over-doing* may be in danger to *undo* all. Upon this Account I do humbly conceive that some *Intermission* and *Diversion* may be as *necessary* for the *Generality* of Men, as their *Meat* and *Drink*. And if we allow any Recreations, then we ought to consider the different Tempers, Educations and Conditions of Men: That may be a Recreation for a *Scholar*, which is not so to a *Plough-man*; and that may please a *States-man*, which would be a Punishment to a *Sea-man*: Nor do all Recreations become the same Persons; and

and if you will allow them Recreations, you must allow them such as are suitable to their Conditions, or else they are none at all to them. But though I am not unwilling to allow of some Recreations, yet I think they ought to be limited with Rules and just Cautions: As, *First*, That none whatsoever be allowed during the Time of publick Worship; for that were to frustrate the very End and Design of the Day, and to shew a Contempt of Religion at that time, when we ought openly and solemnly to make Profession of our *Christianity*. *Secondly*, That they be not over-long and tedious; for Recreation at such Time ought to be subservient to *Devotion*, that the Spirits being refreshed and comforted, they may return to it with more Vigour; but if they eat up too much Time, or be so used as to alienate the Mind from Religious

gious Exercises, they are no longer *Helps*, but *Hindrances*, and so far ought to find no Encouragement. *Thirdly*, That they

be not scandalous or injurious; for in seeking my own Refreshment, I ought not to transgress the Bounds of Justice and Charity towards others at any Time, much less at this, when all ought to conspire to give an Honour and Reputation to their Religion.

But as I would advise the one Part to be as *inoffensive* as possible, so I could wish the other would not be *over-censorious*, and that they would not expect *Men on Earth* to be like *Angels*, but be content to allow some little to *Humanity*. I would say in this Case,

as the Apostle did in another,

Let not him that eateth despise Rom. 14.3.

him that eateth not, and let not him which eateth not judge him that eateth, for God hath received him. There is more Mischief in

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the mutual Censures passed upon each other, and the Heats and other ill Effects thence arising, than there could be in a modest Use of Liberty in this Case, if People would learn how mutually to forbear one another. Let him who asserts his Liberty, use it warily and sparingly: And let him who can over-do others, be thankful to God for his Strength, and compassionate and kind to his Brother; and so both, from Time to Time, shall be better fitted for the Service of God; *To whom be all Glory, &c.*

The END.

